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MEMOIR

OF

THE LIFE

OF

RICHARD HENRY LEE,

AND

HIS CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED MEN IN AMERICA AND EUROPE,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THEIR CHARACTERS,

AND OF THE

EVENTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY HIS GRANDSON

RICHARD H. LEE,

OF LEESBURG, VIRGINIA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:

H. C. CAREY AND I. LEA, CHESNUT STREET.

William Brown, Printer.

1825.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

SEAL. BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixth day of September, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A.D. 1825, H. C. Carey & I. Lea, of the said District, have deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence with the most distinguished Men in America and Europe, illustrative of their Characters, and of the Events of the American Revolution.—By his Grandson, Richard H. Lee, of Leesburg, Virginia. In two volumes. Vol. I."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned." And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

TO

THOMAS JEFFERSON, JOHN ADAMS,

AND

CHARLES CARROLL,

SURVIVING SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,

The Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, the Mover of the Resolution in Congress, on the 7th of June, 1776, "*That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States, &c.*"

Is most respectfully dedicated,

BY THE AUTHOR.

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

CHAPTER I.

Richard Henry Lee, the subject of the following Memoir, was the son of Thomas Lee, of Stratford, in the county of Westmoreland, and colony of Virginia. He was born on the twentieth day of January, 1732.

His forefathers were among the first emigrants to the colony of Virginia. Richard, the great-grandfather, emigrated from England in the reign of Charles the First; but afterwards made several voyages to England, bringing with him, on every return, a number of followers, for each of whom a certain portion of land was granted him, under the title of "Head Rights." He finally settled in the county of Northumberland, in that part of Virginia called "the Northern Neck," between the Rappahanoc and Potomac rivers. He was, for a long time, secretary to Sir William Berkeley, then governor of the colony.* *Richard*, the second son of

* During the civil war between Charles the First and the Parliament, Richard Lee and Sir William Berkeley, being royalists, kept the colony to its allegiance, so that, after the death of the king, Cromwell was obliged to send some ships of war and troops to reduce it. Berkeley and Lee, not being able to resist this

Richard Lee, was one of the king's council, and the first to recognise the grants made by Charles the Second, and James the Second, of the Northern Neck to the Culpepper family, which were afterwards inherited by the family of Fairfax.

Thomas, the third son of the last mentioned person, was, for many years, president of the "King's Council." He was one of the first, of the leading men of the colony, who turned their attention to our western wilds. Having employed an engineer of eminence, from England, for the purpose of exploring them, he, with many others, took up, under the name of the "Ohio Company," an extensive tract of land on the Ohio river. But the company never having obtained a patent from the crown, their title was made void by the revolution. Thomas Lee retained the office of president of the council until his death; and so great was the esteem in which his services were held in the mother country, that a commission of

force, but yet refusing allegiance to Cromwell, brought the commander of the squadron to a treaty, in which Virginia was styled an "*independent dominion.*" This treaty was ratified in England, as made with an independent state. While Charles the Second was at Breda, in Flanders, Richard Lee hired a Dutch ship, and went over to the king, to know whether he could protect the colony, if it returned to its allegiance to him; but finding no support could be obtained, he returned to Virginia, and remained quiet until the death of Cromwell. Upon this event, he, with the assistance of Sir William Berkeley, contrived to get Charles proclaimed "King of England, France, Scotland, Ireland, and Virginia," two years before he was restored to the throne of his ancestors. In gratitude for this loyalty, after the restoration, Charles ordered the arms of Virginia to be added to those of England, France, Scotland, and Ireland, with the motto "En dat Virginia quintam." After the union of England and Scotland, the arms of Virginia, were quartered with those of England, &c. with the motto "En dat Virginia quartam." The author has in his possession an old volume of Colonial Laws of Virginia, printed in England, in the titlepage of which is the representation of the arms of England, France, Ireland, and Virginia quartered, with the motto "En dat Virginia quartam." Hence the title of "Ancient Dominion" has been given to Virginia.—Encyclopædia Britannica, article Virginia.

governor of the colony had been made out for him, when news of his death reached England.*

The maternal ancestors of R. H. Lee were no less conspicuous for their public services. His mother was a daughter of Colonel Ludwell, of Greenspring, near Williamsburg, which was then the seat of the government of the colony. Both he and his son were members of the king's council, and his father had been governor of North Carolina.

At this early period of the colony, there were few seminaries of learning in which the higher branches of education were taught. The youths, whose parents were able to bear the expense, were always sent "home" (as it was then expressed) to England, to complete their studies. Accordingly, Richard H. Lee, after having received a grammatical education in his father's house, under the care of a private teacher, was sent to England, and placed at the academy of Wakefield, in Yorkshire.

Anecdotes of the juvenile years of those, who afterwards become conspicuous on the theatre of the world, when indicative of character, are both pleasing and instructive. It is related of Mr. Lee, that when a boy, knowing he was to be sent to England, it was his custom to make a stout negro boy fight with him every day. To his angry father's question, "what pleasure can you find in such rough sport," the son replied, "I shall shortly have to box with the English boys, and I do not wish to be beaten by them." Thus, it might be said, Providence had given him, in boyhood, an instinctive apprehension of the conflict with that nation, in which he,

* An anecdote, related by a very old gentleman, who had been an intimate acquaintance of Thomas Lee, will put in a strong light his political foresight. He remembered having heard President Lee remark to one of his friends, "that he had no doubt that this country would declare itself, in time, independent of Great Britain; and that the seat of its government would be located near the Little Falls of the Potomac river."—How nearly he came to the fact is remarkable. To evince the confidence he felt in his views, he took up large tracts of land around these Falls, which till lately were in the possession of his descendants.

in manhood, bore so prominent a part; and a
resistance, which he afterwards exhibited so suc
for his native country, and so honourably to hi

At the academy of Wakefield, by the aid o
teachers, and by his own attention and capa
made rapid progress in the academical course c
particularly the Latin and Greek languages: h
ration of the nervous energy of the one, and th
and melody of the other, exhibited, at an early
turity and correctness of taste. He returned, a
19th year of his age, to his native country, tw
after the death of his father, which happened in
1750; and for some time resided with his elder
Although he, at this period, passed a life of
pleasure, it was not one of idleness; active, and
tic, he was always in search of knowledge—
very extensive library which his father had c
furnished him ample means of gratifying his de
intellectual improvement. From the works of
mortal Locke, he acquired an ardent fondness
principles of free government; and from those
worth, Hooker, Grotius, and other writers of th
class, he drew maxims of civil and political m
He read with deep attention and admiration, th
ries of the patriotic and republican ages of Gre
Rome, which animated his love of his country,
liberty. The anarchy which too often disgrace
governments, taught him the value of well defin
stitutions, to guard individuals from the conseque
the prejudices of the many, and the public pro
from the effects of popular passion and caprice.

His taste was refined by reading the works
classic poets, both ancient and modern. Homer,
Milton, and Shakspeare, were his favourite autho
the last he was enthusiastically fond. The best hi
of every age were within his reach; and the vast f
political wisdom derived from them, was striking
hibited, when, in future life, he called for its use
service of his country.

Mr. Lee, without any view to the practice, made himself well acquainted with the principles of the civil law, and the laws of his own country. He applied his mind with particular care, to the study of the history, and the constitution, of England and her colonies. The popular features of these governments attracted his admiration. He was delighted with the free spirit of the nation from which he was descended.

The author has in his possession, the manuscript digests and synopses of the works read by Mr. Lee, during his residence with his brother; they discover the habits and mode of his study; their arrangement is new and always judicious: the subjects are well illustrated, and the views of the authors, when given, are concisely expressed, and happily condensed. To this early mode of study, he was, no doubt, indebted for that conciseness of style, of which he afterwards was as much a master, as he was of brilliant and impressive amplification.

Mr. Lee seems early to have thought too correctly to suppose, that genius can supply the place of study, or enable its possessor to dispense with the labour essential to its advantageous prosecution. He must have been conscious of the quickness and capacity of his mind; but vanity did not delude him with the absurd idea, that knowledge is intuitive. He believed the import of the adage "veritas in puteo," and he laboured to find it. He did not, however, devote himself exclusively to study, he mingled cheerfully in society, and transacted the various business of life with diligence and judgment. He was early remarked for the accuracy with which he conducted his concerns. Hence he was frequently, when comparatively a young man, selected as guardian to infant children of his relatives and friends. In one of his letters to a gentleman in England, to whom he was about to commit the care and education of some of his wards, there is a passage, worthy of a place here, since it contains some reflections on the course of education, as applicable now, as when they were written: "I have no doubt that your good sense will avoid the too common

error of early plunging boys into the study of ancient and other languages, before they have acquired a competent knowledge of their own. By which mistake it is, that so many who are learned in the languages of Greece and Rome, remain unable to write their own with correctness, and still less, to read and speak it with grace and propriety. To avoid this, *and for the still greater benefits of having their minds early impressed with a love of religion and virtue*, are the principal reasons that induce me to prefer private education for some time, to public."

The manners of Mr. Lee were, in the highest degree, affable and polite. The candour and disinterestedness of his character, could not fail to strike every person who had the slightest acquaintance with him—entirely devoid of all pride and guile, he became very popular, immediately upon his entering into the active scenes of life.

It is well known that the famous seven years' war, as it is called by historians, was not confined to the European dominions of the two principal and rival nations engaged in it. The colonies of France and England, in North America, were involved in its bloody and destructive consequences. Our frontier settlements suffered continually and severely, from the predatory incursions of the Indians employed by France in Canada, and along the Ohio river. In 1755, England became convinced, that the colonies of Virginia and Pennsylvania, could not longer, without her aid, effectually resist the irruptions of their horrid enemies. She therefore sent, under the command of general Braddock, a body of regular troops, for the purpose of protecting the frontiers of those colonies. The cruel murders committed in the preceding year by the Indians, in the valley, between the Blue Ridge and North Mountains in Virginia, had excited the indignation of the people of the low counties of that colony. Upon the arrival of general Braddock, volunteer companies of militia were raised, which offered their services to march with the regular army. By a volunteer company of his native county, Mr. Lee was

chosen captain. As soon as it had put itself under his command, he marched to Alexandria, on the Potomac, where the regular army had landed. Upon his arrival at that place, he was much chagrined to find, that their services would not be accepted by Braddock—that, with his companions in arms, he must return to his home, without an opportunity of serving his country.

The following circumstance, which happened at Alexandria, may serve to show the coarse and rude manners of General Braddock, and his haughtiness towards *provincials*, to which may be attributed his subsequent defeat and death. Mr. Lee had walked down to the shore, with General Braddock and some of his officers, where a boat was in readiness to convey them to the commodore's ship. When his officers were on board, although he saw Mr. Lee standing on the shore, General Braddock ordered the men to push off; but the commodore, afterwards the celebrated admiral Keppel, observing this, sternly ordered them to stop, and invited Mr. Lee into the boat, in which he accompanied them to the ship.

Mr. Lee may be said to have inherited a love of public life. Most of his ancestors had devoted the greater part of their lives, to the public service, in posts of honour. They had shown themselves men of business, as well as of capacity. His father had been remarkable for an indefatigable application to public business; and the character of his father, no doubt, had its influence in the formation of the habits of his son. He was appointed about the twenty-fifth year of his age, a justice of the peace for his native county. This office was, at that period of the colony, of much greater importance than it is at present, and the appointment was reserved for men of the greatest purity of character, and generally conferred on those, whose judgments were matured by age. A magistrate in Virginia, performs not only acts of police, but is, ex-officio, a constituent part of the county court, the jurisdiction of which, as a court of common law and equity, was then unlimited. At that

period, suits of the highest grade, and of the greatest importance, were brought in the county courts. In this office, Mr. Lee was active and diligent. He punctually attended in court; and with unwearied patience, went through its most uninteresting business. A copy is found among Mr. Lee's manuscripts, of a petition signed by several magistrates to the governor and council, praying that Mr. Lee's commission might be so dated, that he could act as president of the court, and be allowed precedence in this respect, at an earlier period, than his appointment legally permitted.

He was, in this year, elected a member from Westmoreland, to the House of Burgesses, and from this time, till his death, a period of thirty three years, enjoyed the unabated favour and confidence, not only of the citizens of his native county, but of the state of Virginia. During the first years, of Mr. Lee's service in the House of Burgesses, he had to struggle against a diffidence, which, he began to despair, of ever being able to conquer. It was long before he could be induced to trust himself to the contingencies of extemporaneous discussion. He, however, did not suffer the time to pass without improvement. He made himself master of the various forms, according to which, legislative bodies proceed in the transaction of business; and, acquired an extensive and accurate knowledge of the interests, and financial concerns of the colony. An incident, at that time, of importance to the colony, which will presently be related, at length, occurred to arouse him; and he distinguished himself by an ability and eloquence, which placed him at once, among the first members of the body to which he belonged.

Previous to this epoch in his life, Mr. Lee having become much dissatisfied with several measures of the House of Burgesses, and believing that he could more effectually serve his country in some other station, applied through his friends in London, for a seat in the council. Some of his letters are here inserted, which abound in sentiments ingenuous, dignified, and patriotic,

The manner in which he confutes the objection, that one of his brothers was a member of the council, cannot fail to gratify every reader of sensibility.

WESTMORELAND, VA.
AUGUST, 27, 1762.

SIR—The acquaintance, I had the honour, to form with you when I was in London, in the year '51, will, I hope excuse me to you, for the freedom of this letter. When I consider the weight you deservedly possess, in affairs relative to this colony, I know not any person to whom I can, with more propriety, apply for an application in my behalf, that I may be appointed to fill the next vacancy in his majesty's council. I am the more induced to an application, at this time, as I am informed, that an address is preparing by the council, to his majesty, to remove Mr. —— from their board, on account of his extreme incapacity, to discharge the important duties of that station. If that address succeed, as I should imagine it would, from the weighty reasons assigned in it, then sir, I would lay myself under the great obligation that will arise from your interposition in my behalf: an obligation which will ever influence me, to consider you as my great benefactor, and particular friend. The desire I have to do my country service, is my only motive for this solicitation; and governed by the same reason, my attention has been, for some time turned to public business, both as a member of the legislature, and of our inferior courts of justice. This experience supported by a laudable ambition, will, I hope, render me an object not altogether unworthy of your patronage.

I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem, your obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TO JAMES ABERCROMBIE, ESQ.
In Craven street, London.

WESTMORELAND, VA.
AUGUST, 27, 1762.

DEAR SIR—I wrote to you a few days ago, that the council of this colony, had unanimously addressed his majesty to remove from their board Mr. ——, the last appointed counsellor, on account of his incapacity. If this address succeed, I entreat the favour of you, to exert your friendship that I might be appointed in Mr. ——'s place. If an ardent desire to serve my country, added to considerable time and application, already employed in the service of the public, are to be considered in this appointment, you may safely declare yourself my friend. I shall say nothing of the abilities of the gentleman, who, I understand, has a probability of filling the next vacancy, from the chance he stood last; because, as you know him, this would be unnecessary; and because I think it not proper, to establish my success, by making invidious observations on another. But in his favour, it is urged, that his contiguity to the seat of government, renders his appointment proper, as on government contingencies, his attendance in council could be presently obtained. If this argument, independent of any auxiliary one, was to be admitted, might not *a cobbler in the city dispute the point with him?* Less weight will be found in this reason, when you consider that those who compose our council, meet four times a year of course, to constitute the general and oyer courts; when they sit, on the whole, more than two months, besides the frequent meetings of the general assembly. At these times it is, that council business is chiefly discussed. If, in the intermediate time, any contingency render a council necessary, there are always six or seven of the board, whose situation admits of a very speedy meeting. But in a variety of instances, it may happen, that a dispersion of the councillors through the several parts of the colony, will be attended with advantageous consequences, by their having a more minute

and particular acquaintance with the circumstances of the country.

Against my success, I hear it is urged that I have a brother already in the council. This is true; but can any solid reason be assigned, why this friendly connexion should banish virtue and morality from the breasts of brothers? or does it follow, of course, that those thus allied, should, to promote any views they may be supposed to have, unite to injure their country, and so found their brotherly union on the destruction of honour, duty, and public good? For my part, I think the objection does not hold in theory; and, exclusive of the many historic proofs that might be adduced to confute it, we have a familiar experience here, of two brothers having long sat together in the council, to the honour of his majesty, and to the interests of the colony.

To whom, my dear sir, can you apply with so much effect, as to your noble friend Lord Halifax, since a word from him would accomplish the object; and then the honour of the appointment would be enhanced, by its being the direction of a person so universally admired for the honesty of his heart and the ability of his head. I know you will excuse the length of this letter. With great sincerity, I assure you of the unabated esteem of your affectionate friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To THOMAS CUMMINGS, Esq.
in London.

In another letter, on the same subject, he again contests the force of the objection to his appointment, that his brother was a member. He happily diversifies the argument, and exhibits a mind rich in sentiment. "I hear (he writes) it is objected to me that I have a brother already in the council. It is very true, I have; but candidly considered, how unimportant is this objection, nay, how invidious is it, since the only force it can possibly have, must be derived from a previously established want of virtue in the brothers, which may lead them to coalesce in schemes destructive of their country. For if

honesty mark their character, no leagues of vice will ever be entered on, and an union in virtue can never be improper. But a vicious person should never be preferred, whatever may be his relation to, or disunion with the rest of his companions in office. If this strange objection should be urged, how easily could your genius and penetration thoroughly overcome it," &c.

CHAPTER II.

It has been stated that Mr. Lee, at an early period of his life, was elected a member of the House of Burgesses of Virginia; and that probably, more than one session passed, without any participation, on his part, in the debates. The natural diffidence of his character was increased by the respect and deference he entertained, for men of ability and experience, and the House of Burgesses, at this time, contained many men of this description. The first speech of Mr. Lee, as far as can be ascertained, was on a motion "to lay so heavy a duty on the importation of slaves, as effectually to put an end to that iniquitous and disgraceful traffic within the colony of Virginia." The lively interest which he felt in the success of the motion, incited him to exert all his powers in its support. The timidity, however, with which he took part in the debate, may be perceived from the brevity and care with which he prepared his speech. Although short, it will be seen that it contains the germ of every sound argument, which has been since unfolded, against the immoral character, the practical barbarities, and the political consequences of the slave trade. How different would have been the actual condition and the prospects of Virginia, had his arguments prevailed, and the policy which he recommended been adopted and enforced.

"Sir, as the consequences of the determination we must make in the subject of this day's debate will greatly affect posterity, as well as ourselves, it surely merits our most serious attention. And well am I persuaded, sir, that if it be so considered, it will appear, both from reason and experience, that the importation of slaves into this colony has been, and will be attended with effects,

dangerous, both to our political and moral interests. When it is observed that some of our neighbouring colonies, though much later than ourselves in point of settlement, are now far before us in improvement, to what, sir, can we attribute this strange, this unhappy truth? The reason seems to be this: *that with their whites they import arts and agriculture, whilst we, with our blacks, exclude both.* Nature has not partially favoured them with superiour fertility of soil, nor do they enjoy more of the sun's cheering and enlivening influence; yet greatly have they outstript us.

"Were not this sufficient, sir, let us reflect on our dangerous vicinity to a powerful neighbour, and that slaves, from the nature of their situation, can never feel an interest in our cause, because they see us enjoying every privilege and luxury, and find security established, not for them, but for others, and because they observe their masters possessed of liberty which is denied to them, whilst they and their posterity are subjected for ever to the most abject and mortifying slavery. Such a people must be natural enemies to society, and their increase consequently dangerous.

"This reasoning we find verified in the Grecian and Roman histories, where some of the greatest convulsions recorded, were occasioned by the insurrections of their slaves; insomuch, says a Roman historian, that Sicily was more cruelly laid waste by the war with the slaves, than by that with the Carthagenians. This slavish policy still continuing at Rome, at length increased their slaves to such a prodigious number, as obliged the Romans to make laws for their government so severe, that the bare relation of them is shocking to human nature.

"Nor, sir, are these the only reasons to be urged against the importation. In my opinion, not the cruelties practised in the conquest of Spanish America, not the savage barbarity of a Saracen, can be more big with atrocity, than our cruel trade to Africa. There we encourage those poor, ignorant people, to wage eternal war

against each other; not nation against nation, but father against son, children against parents, and brothers against brothers, whereby parental, filial, and fraternal duty is terribly violated; that by war, stealth, or surprise, we *Christians* may be furnished with our *fellow-creatures*, who are no longer to be considered as created in the image of God as well as ourselves, and equally entitled to liberty and freedom by the great law of nature, but they are to be deprived, for ever deprived, of all the comforts of life, and to be made the most wretched of the human kind. I have seen it observed by a great writer, that Christianity, by introducing into Europe the truest principles of humanity, universal benevolence, and brotherly love, had happily abolished civil slavery. Let us, who profess the same religion, practise its precepts; and by agreeing to this duty, convince the world that we know and practise our true interests, and that we pay a proper regard to the dictates of justice and humanity!"

This speech gained for Mr. Lee some applause; but it did not procure for him that decided reputation and popularity, which he soon afterwards enjoyed. An occasion at length occurred, which related more immediately to the politics of the house, and on which the feelings of a brother had been, as Mr. Lee thought, unjustifiably wounded. Affection for his brother, and indignation at the unworthy conduct and unfair treatment which he had received, fired Mr. Lee; and calling forth, into vigorous exercise, the latent powers of his intellect, discovered to his fellow citizens, inexhaustible sources of a rich, brilliant and energetic eloquence.

To enable the reader to catch something of the spirit of the transaction about to be recorded, a short account of the parties of that time, may be necessary. Two parties divided the House of Burgesses. These were strongly marked; and the spirit of their politics was widely different. Although they could not be correctly called "whig and tory," they might be termed aristocratic and republican. The society of Virginia was then generally and obviously divided into two classes; the one

was constituted of men who owned large landed estates, cultivated by bodies of slaves; the other, of the solid and independent yeomanry. They were equally distinct from each other in their manners and customs. The former lived in great splendour and luxury, and imitating in their mode of life, the nobility of England, they possessed, no doubt, much of the spirit of aristocracy. Between this and the latter class, there was little or no intercourse.* The members of the assembly carried into that body, the manners and feelings of the class, in which their birth or their wealth, had placed them. The aristocratic members looked down upon those, who came from the lower orders, as they termed them, while these looked upon the others with jealousy and dislike. The more intelligent members of the republican party, viewed the "aristocrats" with a sort of political abhorrence, as enemies to the popular features of the constitution. Mr. Lee, from the convictions of reason, and from the bias of education and reading, was a firm and ardent member of the republican party.† He was an admirer, and called himself a disciple of Hampden, and Sydney, and Pelham.

In this state of the two parties in the legislature, the republican members determined to bring forward a measure, for the success of which they felt great anxiety. Mr. Thomas Lee, an elder brother of Mr. Lee, who was also a member of the house, and attached to the popular party, was selected to introduce a resolution on the subject. This gentleman, though accustomed to speak, was still oppressed by that diffidence and embarrassment, which had hitherto repressed the genius of his brother. Urged however, by the zeal of his party, and probably by the intrinsic merit of the measure he was about to propose, his introductory speech was one of great strength. But he had forgotten, that the rules

* See Life of P. Henry, p. 33, &c.

† The word "republican," is here used in the sense in which it might be applied to Cimon, or to Cato.

of the house required, that every motion should be reduced to writing, before it could be put from the chair. The speaker of the house, who was the head of the opposite party, availed himself of this oversight, and reminded Mr. Lee, with great asperity, of the rule, and the violation of it, of which he had been guilty. Mr. Lee was so confounded by the manner of the speaker, that he was utterly unable to retrieve the consequences of his mistake, or to take advantage of the impression which his speech had evidently made. The hopes of the opposition, who perceived the confusion of their champion began to fall, and despair, at length, was spreading among them, when, to their surprise, R. H. Lee, stung with resentment at the manner in which his brother had been treated, arose with a written motion, and prefaced it with a bold and brilliant speech. His political friends exhibited at once astonishment and delight, while his adversaries were confounded—he became from that time the darling of his party. His knowledge of business and application to it, his information on all subjects before the house, and his conciliating manners, now speedily constituted him the leader of his party, and a prominent and useful member of the legislature. Mr. Thomas Lee could never afterwards be prevailed on to speak. Hence, it was remarked at the time, that the incident which had destroyed one orator, had raised up another.

The next occasion upon which Mr. Lee distinguished himself as an useful, intrepid and patriotic member, was one of real importance to the colony. Mr. Robinson, who, from his family and wealth, was at the head of the aristocratic party, united in his person the offices of speaker of the House of Burgesses, and treasurer of the colony. The latter office was in the gift of the crown, and those who held it had always been obsequious to the court. Such was the case with Mr. Robinson. Possessed of great wealth, and high in official dignity, and being besides a person of an unassuming air, and politeness of manners, and of a great amiableness of na-

ture, he was the most popular man of his party, and was personally much beloved. As a politician and legislator, he was a known "aristocrat"—yet many members of the republican party were in habits of friendly intercourse with him, and esteemed him as a man while they opposed him, and the measures of his political friends.

The colony of Virginia had contracted large debts, by its exertions in the French and Indian wars, which had desolated its western frontiers. It had been compelled to anticipate its revenue, and to borrow considerable sums of money. To repay these loans, it had issued government paper, redeemable, in each year, to a certain amount, by taxes pledged for the purpose. It was made the duty of the treasurer, to burn the bills which should be annually called in. The treasurer had been liberal of his private funds to his friends, whose style of living required larger expenditures, than their estates yielded. When these were exhausted, he had been induced to lend to many members of the House of Burgesses, the government bills which had been redeemed, and ought to have been destroyed. It is said, that he relied on his own means to prevent any ultimate injury to the state, and upon the security he had taken. The fact, that the treasurer had made an improper use of the money of the public, became known; or, at least, strong suspicions, were entertained on the subject. These suspicions gave rise to conversations among the opposition party; and, it was in agitation, to move an inquiry into the grounds of them. The considerations, that the speaker was individually concerned in the inquiry contemplated; that the interests of the colony were involved in it; that some of the ablest and most influential men in the house, were the intimate friends of the speaker, and that a failure to prove his defalcation, no matter from what cause, would be represented as the just result of a malignant attack on him, made it a delicate and fearful task, to move the inquiry. Great indecision and backwardness were evinced. Mr. Lee, as soon as he had satisfied his mind that there were grounds upon

which to rest the suspicions, determined to brave every risk, and to assert the justice and necessity, of bringing delinquents to punishment. To his mind, their exaltation and influence, offered no just exception to the rigid application of these principles. The difficulties he would have to encounter, in the present cause, served only to stimulate his firm and adventurous spirit. Accordingly, he moved "that a committee be appointed to inquire into the state of the treasury." As soon as the government partly perceived what subject Mr. Lee was about to agitate, they discovered symptoms of alarm, and prepared for a strenuous resistance. The speaker fixt his eyes with a dark and terrible frown upon Mr. Lee. The members opposed to his motion, turned their faces from him, with haughty and disdainful airs: but, these things had no other effect, than to animate Mr. Lee to strains of indignant eloquence. The most able and influential members of the house, opposed his motion, yet, he refuted with great force, all objections to the inquiry, and seemed to gain strength and ardour, from the very means taken to defeat it. The resolution was finally adopted; then pursuing his success, he brought the business to a close, which promised to save the colony from great fiscal embarrassment, and the people from additional burdens. This achievement of Mr. Lee, added greatly to his reputation throughout the colony. The author has found among the manuscripts of Mr. Lee, a letter from a gentleman of a distant county of the colony, and not personally acquainted with him, complimenting him on the part he had acted, and thanking him, for the good he had done to his fellow citizens.

A state of things was now commencing, which was to abolish all party distinctions in the colony of Virginia; to afford an occasion for the exercise of the highest talents, and the noblest virtues, and to lead to the independence of the United States.

England had just concluded the peace of Paris, which was preceded by one of the most extensive and bloody wars, that had ever desolated civilized Europe. She

had come out of it, covered with glory; her troops had fought, and conquered, in almost every quarter of the globe; her statesmen were renowned; and the boldness and energy of the illustrious Pitt, had placed her first among the nations of the earth. The fame of her premier was co-extensive with the glory of the "Great" Frederick.* The humbled house of Bourbon, in all its branches, owned her triumphs. But it seems a wise ordination of Providence, that national glory gained in fields of blood and conquest, is, in almost every instance, connected with domestic embarrassment and suffering. Such was the case with England. When the splendid halo had flitted from the vision of her people, they found themselves loaded with debt. Their statesmen were anxiously looked to for relief; but they in vain perplexed themselves to discover any sufficiently productive source of revenue, to meet the difficulties, in which, the finances of the country were involved. Notwithstanding this state of the treasury, the ministry, which had come into power upon the conclusion of the war, unaccountably determined to raise twenty new regiments. That profound statesman and celebrated orator Edmund Burke, gives this account of that measure, *which first turned the eyes of English financiers, to the colonies.*† "At that period (at the close of the war,) the necessity was established of keeping up no less than twenty new regiments, with twenty colonels capable of seats in this house. This scheme was adopted with very general applause from all sides, at the very time, when by your conquest in America, your danger from foreign attempts in that quarter of the world was much lessened, or, indeed, quite over. When this huge increase of military

* The author cannot apply this appellation to Frederick the Second of Prussia, without expressing the limitation, in this instance attached to it. As a victorious warrior, and as an acute statesman, he certainly merits the appellation of "Great." But the author can scarcely find language to express the detestation, in which he holds his character, as a man and a ruler.

† In his masterly speech on American taxation.

establishment was resolved on, a revenue was to be found to support so great a burden. Country gentlemen, the great patrons of economy, and resisters of standing armies, would not have entered with so much alacrity into a vote for so large and expensive an army, if they had been sure, that they were to continue to pay for it. But hopes of another kind, were held out to them; and in particular, I well remember, that Mr. Townsend, in a brilliant harangue on this subject, did dazzle them by laying before their eyes the image of a revenue to be raised in America. Here began to dawn the first glimmerings of this new colony system."

The same great statesman thus exhibits the development of the principle assumed by the ministry, and so blindly followed by the Parliament of Great Britain, "that the mother country had a right to tax America, without her consent." "But the grand manœuvre in that business of new regulating the colonies, was the fifteenth act of the fourth of George the Third, which, besides containing several of the matters to which I alluded, opened a new principle; and here properly began the second period of the policy of this country with regard to the colonies, by which a scheme of regular plantation parliamentary revenue, was adopted in theory, and settled in practice. This act, sir, had for the first time, the title of 'giving and granting' duties in the colonies and plantations in America; and for the first time, it was asserted in the preamble, 'that it was just and necessary, that a revenue should be raised there.' Then come the technical words of 'giving and granting,' and thus a complete American revenue act was made, in all the forms, and with a full avowal of the equity, policy, and even the necessity of taxing the colonies, without any formal consent of theirs. There were contained also in the preamble to that act, these very remarkable words, 'the Commons being desirous to make some provision towards raising the said revenue.' By these words, it appeared to the colonies, that this act was only

the beginning of sorrows, &c. This ill prospect appeared boundless in extent and endless in duration."

The 15th act of 4 Geo. III., of which Mr. Burke speaks, was the act which announced the determination of Parliament to tax America, and preceded the famous stamp act, the principle of which the colonies denied, and the practical operation of which they finally resisted.

In March, 1764, as every reader remembers, the principle, asserted by Parliament, was carried out into an act, on motion of Mr. Grenville, the first commissioner of the treasury, in which it was declared "to be proper to impose certain stamp duties in the colonies, for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, payable into the British exchequer."

Mr. Lee quickly perceived the unconstitutionality and danger of the principle asserted in this act. He saw clearly, not only its fallacy, but the extent to which it would reach, and the duration of the oppression, to which it would lead, and immediately denounced it, in letters to his friends in England, and in his conversations with his fellow-citizens. It was not his nature, to be silent, or passive when the slightest violence to right was done. When he perceived one of the dearest rights of his country was denied or infringed, he became active and intrepid. He wrote (in letters to his friends and in the paper of the colony) and spoke against the measure just now mentioned, using every argument to rouse his countrymen to a sense of the dangers about to surround them.

In March, 1764, Mr. Grenville's declaratory act passed; and in May following, Mr. Lee wrote to a gentleman in London, who was a public character, expressing his opinion of the measure, and proving the incompatibility of the act with the constitution of Great Britain, and with the rights of his countrymen; also strongly and eloquently stating their claims to the gratitude of the mother country. It has been recorded of a celebrated patriot* of the revolution, that in expressing his views,

* P. Henry.

confidentially, to a private company of his friends, in the year 1773, of the probable consequences of resistance to Great Britain, he foretold, that when Louis XVI. was convinced, by our opposition and declaration of independence, that the colonies would not submit, he would join us. This is certainly an instance of great sagacity; for not even then, as it was supposed, had any person ever before suggested the probability of such measures, as those of resistance and independence. No one can fail to be struck, then, with that foresight and sagacity which, in 1764, when as yet only the Declaratory Act had passed, suggested the probability that the measures it contemplated, "though intended to oppress and keep us low, in order to secure our dependence, might be subversive of that end;" "and may produce a fatal resentment of parental care, being converted into tyrannical usurpation." In the letter from which these quotations are made, glows the spirit of an early American patriot.

CHANTILLY, VA.
MAY 31, 1764.

"MY DEAR SIR—At a time when universal selfishness prevails, and when (did not a very few instances evince the contrary) one would be apt to conclude that friendship, with Astrea, had fled this degenerate world, how greatly happy must be the man who can boast of having a friend. That this happiness is mine, the whole tenor of my life's correspondence with you proves most clearly.

"Many late determinations of the great, on your side of the water, seem to prove a resolution, to oppress North America with the iron hand of power, unrestrained by any sentiment, drawn from reason, the liberty of mankind, or the genius of their own government. 'Tis said the House of Commons readily resolved, that it had 'a right to tax the subject here, without the consent of his representative;' and that, in consequence of this, they had proceeded to levy on us a considerable annual sum, for the support of a body of troops to be kept up

in this quarter. Can it be supposed that those brave adventurous Britons, who originally conquered and settled these countries, through great dangers to themselves and benefit to the mother country, meant thereby to deprive themselves of the blessings of that free government of which they were members, and to which they had an unquestionable right? or can it be imagined that those they left behind them in Britain, regarded those worthy adventurers, by whose distress and enterprise they saw their country so much enlarged in territory, and increased in wealth, as aliens to their society, and meriting to be enslaved by their superior power? No, my dear sir, neither one nor the other of these can be true, because reason, justice, and the particular nature of the British constitution, nay, of all government, cry out against such opinions! Surely no reasonable being would, at the apparent hazard of his life, quit liberty for slavery; nor could it be just in the benefited, to repay their benefactors with chains instead of the most grateful acknowledgments. And as certain it is, that 'the free possession of property, the right to be governed by laws made by our representatives, and the illegality of taxation without consent,' are such essential principles of the British constitution, that it is a matter of wonder how men, who have almost imbibed them in their mother's milk, whose very atmosphere is charged with them, should be of opinion that the people of America were to be taxed without consulting their representatives! It will not avail to say that these restrictions on the right of taxation, are meant to restrain only the sovereign, and not Parliament. The intention of the constitution is apparent, to prevent unreasonable impositions on the people; and no method is so likely to do that, as making their own consent necessary, for the establishment of such impositions. But if no such consent is allowed in our case, it will still be an aggravation of our misfortune to be the slaves of five hundred masters instead of one. It would seem, indeed, to be unquestionably true, that before a part of any community can be justly deprived of the rights and privi-

leges, to which they are entitled by the constitution and laws, there must have been some great and palpable injury offered by them to the society of which they are a part. But did this happen in the case of the first settlers of America? or did they, by any treasonable combination against, or by any violation offered to, the laws of their country, make it proper, in their country, to deprive them of their birth right? It remains, therefore, that we cannot be deprived of English liberty, though it may appear expedient that we should be despoiled of it. But after all, my dear friend, the ways of Heaven are inscrutable; and frequently, the most unlooked-for events have arisen from seemingly the most inadequate causes. Possibly this step of the mother country, though intended to oppress and keep us low, in order to secure our dependence, may be subversive of this end. Poverty and oppression, among those whose minds are filled with ideas of British liberty, may introduce a virtuous industry, with a train of generous and manly sentiments, which, when in future they become supported by numbers, may produce a fatal resentment of parental care being converted into tyrannical usurpation. I hope you will pardon so much on this subject. My mind has been warmed, and I hardly know where to stop," &c.

Mr. Lee was again elected in the spring of 1764, to the House of Burgesses; and being determined to make an effort to induce the house to express its opinion of the declaratory act, by some solemn and efficient measure, he brought forward the subject soon after the meeting of the Assembly. The passage of the act had been made known to the House of Burgesses, by the colonial agent, Mr. Arthur Lee, a brother of R. H. Lee. After great deliberation, a special committee was appointed to draught an address to the king, a memorial to the House of Lords, and a remonstrance to the House of Commons. Mr. Lee was placed on this committee, and selected to prepare the address to the king, and the memorial to the lords; and these are the first public productions from his pen, so far as it can be ascertained. The author has

the original manuscripts of these documents, with which the journals of the House of Burgesses correspond, as may be seen from the journals of the House of Burgesses, November, 1764, p. 38, &c. They contain the genuine principles of the revolution, and abound in the firm and eloquent sentiments of freemen. The successful vindication of these principles has rendered our revolutionary struggle glorious. They form the basis of our free institutions, and adorn their superstructure.

In one who so clearly perceived the gross fallacy of the principle of the declaratory act, and the consequences which would result from it in practice, it was not strange, that it should have produced a feeling of deep concern, mixed with indignation, against those who had devised a scheme so adverse to the rights, and so threatening to the prosperity of his country. Mr. Lee constantly and vehemently denounced it; and expressed on all public occasions the opinion, that the colonies were no longer free. So strongly was this opinion impressed upon his mind, and so certainly did he foresee the practical injury which was to be attempted, that he declared his fellow-citizens to be in a state of more than "Egyptian bondage"—and maintained that liberty, British liberty, could not co-exist with the assertion of a principle, contrary to the constitution. He was too well versed in the nature and forms of other governments, and too well acquainted with the actual condition of their inhabitants, to compare with them the real situation of the colonies, and the political privileges yet possessed by them. But this comparative freedom did not satisfy him, whose mind was stored with historic recollections of the exertions of his English ancestors, for what they termed their "birth-rights," and animated with the love of liberty.

The declaratory act of 1764, was followed by the practical application of the principle it asserted, and the famous stamp act, passed by the British Parliament in the winter session of 1765, was to take effect at the beginning of the following November. Mr. Lee considered this

act "a fatal blow" to the liberty of America; but his opinions and sentiments will be best illustrated by the following letters written about that period.

CHANTILLY, Va.
JULY 4, 1765.

"MY DEAREST SIR—By Captain Talman, I was favoured with your obliging letter of April last, before the receipt of which, I had been informed of the fatal blow given to American liberty, by the ever to be detested stamp act. I am greatly obliged to you, my best friend, for your design of helping me to that collection;* but it is very well that the appointment has passed me, since, by the unanimous suffrage of his countrymen ..... is regarded as an execrable monster, who with parricidal heart and hands, hath concern in the ruin of his native country. The light in which our Assembly viewed that act, may be collected from their resolves at the last meeting, which occasioned their dissolution. I would have sent you a copy, had I not been persuaded that some of your numerous friends had done so already.

"Have you read a pamphlet said to be written by George Grenville, in which he has, in vain, laboured to prove the legislative right of Britain to tax America? If no better arguments can be produced in support of the measures he contends for, it proves the intrinsic vileness of his scheme; and shows indeed, that systems calculated to destroy public liberty, can be maintained only by idle sophistry and a poor affectation of wit. It is most clear, that such doctrines are as far remote from true policy as they are apparently the production of a futile dealer in expedients, who understands not to draw the necessary supplies of government from such sources only

* Mr. Lee, by the persuasion of some of his friends, had been induced, on the first mention of the stamp act, to apply for a collector's office. He, however, quickly discerned the design and principle of the act, and stopped the application. See his vindication presently.

as are consistent with the end of all government, the safety, ease, and happiness of the people.

"Yours affectionately,

"RICHARD HENRY LEE."

The same day on which the above letter was written, Mr. Lee wrote to his brother Mr. Arthur Lee, then in London, who had consulted him on the propriety of making that city his permanent residence. He strongly dissuades his brother from such a step, and urges the claims which his native land had to all its sons, particularly to such as had acquired a knowledge of arts and science. In this letter, written so early in Mr. Lee's political life, may be seen his estimation of the importance of knowledge and learning, to the true and lasting welfare of a nation. These enlightened sentiments he never ceased to enforce, not only by all the power of his eloquence, but also by his example, throughout a useful and bright career. After writing on matters of private concern, he thus introduces the subject which seemed ever near his heart, the cause of his country:

"Every man in America hath much reason to lament with you, the loss of American liberty. As bad indeed as Egyptian bondage, is now become the fate of every inhabitant of America, by the mother country being converted into an arbitrary, cruel, and oppressive stepdame. But this most unjust proceeding (the stamp act) against us, should instruct every American, that as liberty can never be supported without arts and learning, a diligent attention to those should be the ruling object, with every thinking man. But then, my brother, when these, or either of these are acquired, should not their possessor import them into his native country; which, if forsaken by the best of her sons, must fall into barbarous ignorance, and of course, become a fit subject for tyrannical natures to impose arbitrary and injurious acts upon. Should America make the same progress in the arts and sciences, as she infallibly must do in numbers of people, despotism will quickly learn, that her friend-

ship is on no other terms to be obtained than by a free intercourse and equal participation of good offices, liberty and free constitution of government.

America, then, has a parent's claim to her descendants, and a right to insist that they shall not fix in any place, where, by so doing, they may add strength to cruel and tyrannical oppression.

I am, my dear brother, ever your affectionate, faithful friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Mr. Lee did not confine his exertions in opposition to the stamp act to letters to distant correspondents; but, very soon after it became a law, he determined to exert all his powers in open and direct attempts to defeat its operations in Virginia. In a paper that follows, will be seen the bold and efficient means he took to effect this object. When we reflect upon the state of the laws of the colony at this period, we cannot but admire the adventurous spirit manifested by this ardent patriot. The laws were still in the hands of the officers of the crown, and Mr. Lee exposed himself to their pains and penalties. But no considerations of personal safety or convenience appear to have had any weight with him, when his country claimed his services. The same intrepid spirit, which, in 1765, led him to place himself in the front of opposition, actuated him throughout the momentous struggle that followed. In the course of this Memoir, the reader will remark, that his firmness and intrepidity never forsook him. In the gloomiest period of the revolution, when nearly all hearts began to faint, and the boldest asserters of freedom to despond, Mr. Lee exhibited the same firm and unshaken fortitude in council, which distinguished his friend and fellow citizen, Washington, in the field.

Among the various methods which Mr. Lee took to prevent the operations of the stamp act, the most prominent was to form an association for the purpose of deterring all persons from accepting the office of vender of

stamp paper, and for awing into silence and inactivity those who might still be attached to the supremacy of the mother country, and disposed to advocate the right of colony taxation. A copy of the original draught of the articles of the association, written by Mr. Lee, and kept by him, as the head and leader of the combination, is here inserted. This association was true to its pledge, and tended to spread extensively the spirit of resistance.

"Articles of association, by the citizens of Westmoreland, for the purpose of opposing the stamp act.

Roused by danger, and alarmed at attempts foreign and domestic, to reduce the people of this country to a state of *abject and detestable slavery*, by destroying that free and happy constitution of government under which they have hitherto lived; we, who have subscribed this paper, have associated, and do bind ourselves to each other, to God, and our country, by the firmest ties which religion and virtue can frame, to stand by, *and with ourselves and fortunes* to support, maintain, and defend each other, in the observation *and execution* of these following articles:

1. We declare all due allegiance to our lawful sovereign George the Third, King of Great Britain, and we determine to the uttermost of our power to preserve the laws, the peace, and good order of this colony, so far as is consistent with the preservation of our constitution, our rights, and liberty.

2. As we *know* it to be the birthright privilege of every British subject, (and of every Virginian, as such,) founded on reason, law, and compact, that he shall not be tried but by his peers, and shall not be taxed but by the consent of a parliament, in which he is represented by persons who themselves pay a part of what they impose upon others. If, therefore, any person or persons shall attempt, by any action or proceeding, to deprive this colony of those fundamental rights, we will immediately regard him or them as the most dangerous enemy of the community; and we will go to any extremity, not

only to prevent the success of such an attempt, but to stigmatize and punish the offender.

3. As the stamp act does absolutely direct the property of the people to be taken from them, without their consent, expressed by their representatives; and as, in many cases, it deprives the British American subject of his right to be tried by jury, *we do determine, at every hazard, and paying no regard to danger or to death,* to exert every faculty to prevent the execution of the said stamp act, in every instance whatever, within the colony of Virginia; and every *abandoned wretch,* who shall be so lost to virtue and public good, as wickedly to contribute to introduce the said act into this colony, by using stamp paper, or by any other means, will, with the utmost expedition, be convinced, that immediate danger and disgrace shall attend his prostitute purpose.

4. That the last article may most surely and effectually be executed, we engage to each other, that whenever it shall be known to any of this association, that any person is so conducting himself as to favour the introduction of the stamp act, immediate notice shall be given to as many of this association as possible; and every individual, so informed, shall, with expedition, repair to some place of meeting, to be appointed as near the scene of action as may be.

5. Every associator shall use his true endeavour to obtain as many signers to this association as he possibly can.

6. If any attempt shall be made on the liberty or property of any associator, for any action or thing to be done in consequence of this agreement, we do most solemnly bind ourselves, by the sacred engagements entered into, at the risk of our lives and fortunes to restore such an associator to his liberty, and to protect him in the enjoyment of his property.

In testimony of the good faith with which we resolve to execute this association, we have, this 27th day of February, 1766, put our hands and seals hereto."

The devotion of Mr. Lee to the cause of his country

did not evaporate in argument, or waste itself in idle declamation. It led him, while even yet the insignia and representatives of royalty were "on the high places" of the land, and while crown law and crown officers were still strong, to dare open and direct opposition to the devices of arbitrary power. He was active in rousing, informing, and leading his fellow citizens, and obtaining numerous signatures to the articles of the association.

He was, at this time, the captain of a volunteer company of light horse, in his county. The members of this company, warmly attached to him, and confiding in his courage, and in his knowledge of the rights of America, had joined the association, in a spirit congenial with his own. A person, whose name need not be mentioned here, had not only declared his intention to use stamp paper, but had accepted the office of stamp collector. When Mr. Lee was informed of these circumstances, according to the fourth article of the association, he gave notice to as many of the members of it as he could, and summoned his company of horse. They proceeded to the residence of the stamp collector, and required him to bring out his commission, and all the paper he had in his house, and deliver it to them; and also to bind himself, by an oath, neither directly nor indirectly to promote the sale or use of stamp paper. The collector expostulated, hesitated, and at length refused. A stout and fierce-looking man of the troop advanced at this moment to him, and with a stern look and penetrating voice addressed him, "Swear." The terrified collector pronounced the oath, and brought out his commission and stamp paper, which were solemnly burnt in his presence.

The person, whom Mr. Lee and his associates had thus compelled to abandon the support of the stamp act, notwithstanding the unpopularity of it, had declared that he would use stamp paper, in clearing out the first vessel he should freight for England. He was a man of wealth and influence, and might have been very instrumental in introducing into use, the odious paper,

and in encourageing those who were attached to the views of the present ministry. Mr. Lee was aware of this, and took every mode he could devise, to excite the vengeance of the people against him. For this purpose, he published the following address to the people of Virginia, which was admirably adapted to the comprehension of the people generally, and to the state of feeling then existing.

"TO THE GOOD PEOPLE OF VIRGINIA.*

"FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS—It is the business of every honest man, when he knows that any thing is about to be done, by which his countrymen will be ruined, to give them timely notice of the danger, that they may take proper care to save themselves from the destruction that threatens them. I shall, therefore, point out the mischief; I do not doubt, that you will, like brave and free born men, do your endeavour to prevent it.

"When your fathers came first from England, to discover and settle this country, they had a right to, and did enjoy, the same liberties with the rest of their fellow subjects in England. And the king, at that time, knowing what great benefit it would be to England, to settle this country, and what great dangers the first settlers must meet with, did give them his royal word, in an instrument, called a charter, that they and their children, and all who came after them, should hold their liberty and property, as the people of England did, and as they would have done, had they remained there. Now, one of the best rights that Englishmen enjoy, is, that their property, *their living*, shall not be taken from them, *nor any part of it*, except by the consent of those members or burgesses, whom they shall choose at their elections to represent them. Because, if the burgesses, who are chosen by them, and live among them, and have estates

* From Mr. Lee's manuscript.

among them, should lay a tax upon the country, they will have to pay their proportionable part; and besides, if they do wrong, and lay taxes without reason, the people can turn them out, at the new elections. This reasonable right, you know, my contrymen, we have all along enjoyed. Nor did one fellow subject in England, ever doubt it, until lately, when the stamp act was passed; which, if excuted, it is supposed, would take from this poor country, at least, fifty thousand pounds sterling every year; a sum twice as much, as all our taxes by our assembly yet amount to, *and which must ruin us all.* Nay, I question, whether in a few years, we should be able to pay this tax, even though we *should sell our lands and slaves, with our wives and children into the bargain.* And what is worse than this, if the stamp act should go down here, the people of England will go on to tax us every year, *because the more they tax us, the less necessity will there be to tax themselves.* And because our freeholders do not vote at their elections for members of Parliament, and, therefore, cannot displace them, let them do what they will. As it is well known from these reasons, that the stamp act would certainly ruin the people of this colony, by taking away their *liberty* with their property; many of our worthy countrymen, by their conduct at Williamsburg, the thirty-first of October last, have hitherto prevented this cruel act, from going into operation in Virginia; for no paper can now be had, as the stamp master has resigned his office. This I am told, is the case in all the other colonies; the people every where, abhorring the act as we do. When this is so well known to be the opinion every where, does it not deserve your highest indignation, and ought you not to punish in the severest manner, ... if he should do, what he has the matchless impudence to declare he will do? for he has said, he would clear out his vessel on stamp paper, which he knows where to get—from abroad no doubt. Now it is plain, if you permit ..... to set this example, other merchants will follow it, and thus the stamp act, which is to destroy our liberty,

will be established in trade; from trade, will creep into our courts of justice, and from thence, into every branch of business in this country. Now is the time, my countrymen, by nipping in the bud this wicked design, to show the world, that you determine to hand down to your children, the liberty given you by your fathers; and that will not suffer the execution of the stamp act, by which you, and your children are to be made slaves, and your property to be taken from you by violence. On this occasion, every one should think alike; every one should look on ....., as the greatest enemy of his country, and who should be punished, unless he immediately give up his intention to use stamp paper, and publicly inform us of this change of his opinion. Let us so do with this man, *that fear may haunt him in his dreams*, and in the *day find no safety*, while he gives every one of you reason to be his enemy, and makes it your *duty* to be his foe. This self-interested man says, it will be hard on him, not to send out his *grain;* but, will it not be harder on the good people *of Virginia, to loose their liberty?* And shall we ever agree, that the good of *all*, should be given up for the *interest of one man?* Let it never be forgotten by my countrymen, that the safety of the people is the supreme law, and that no private interest, nor any other consideration, should destroy this.

A Virginia Planter."

The boldness and energy, with which Mr. Lee opposed the stamp act, rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to those, who from interest, or any other motive, were attached to the authority of England. His popularity and his eloquence, made him an object of their fear and their hatred. It will readily be imagined, that every effort was made to lessen his influence, both in the Assembly and with the people. Among the many arts used by the adherents of arbitrary power, to effect this object, the most alarming, was an accusation of having applied

for the place of stamp collector, and of having turned an enemy to the act, and a popular demagogue, from disappointment. This charge having had some ground to support it, began to produce the effect intended; at least, among those who were not acquainted with Mr. Lee. As he had explained the matter to the people of Westmoreland, they henceforth treated it with contempt; but it now became necessary, to publish a candid account of the motives which induced him, to make such application, and afterwards to decline the appointment, even before the final passage of the act. The statement of the whole transaction, completely exculpated him from the dishonourable motives alleged to have influenced him in his conduct. His enemies had the mortification to find, that their attempts to injure him, served only to raise him higher in public estimation; and to be still more admired and caressed, as an able and patriotic asserter of the rights of his native country. His address to the Editor of the Virginia Gazette, is here presented to the reader.

WESTMORELAND,
July 25, 1766.

"Sir—To remove the painful consideration that one worthy person should be induced by misrepresentation, to think ill of me, is the reason which prevails with me, to desire you will be good enough to insert what follows, in your next gazette.

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"Richard Henry Lee."

"Early in November, 1764, I was, for the first time, informed by a gentleman of the intention of Parliament to lay a stamp duty in America, with a friendly proposition on his part, to use his influence to procure for me the office of stamp collector. I call it friendly, because I believe the gentleman no more than myself, nor perhaps a single person in this country, had at that time, reflected the least, on the nature and tendency of such an act. Considering this only in the light of a benefi-

cial employment, I agreed the gentleman should write, and I wrote myself. It was but a few days after my letters were sent, that reflecting on the nature of the application I had made, the impropriety of an American being engaged in such an affair, struck me so strongly, that I determined to exert every faculty I possessed, both in private and public life, to prevent the success of a measure, which I now discovered to be in the highest degree, pernicious to my country. I considered that to err, is certainly the portion of humanity; but that it was the business of an honest man to recede from error as soon as he discovered it; and that the strongest principle of duty called upon every citizen to prevent the ruin of his country, without being restrained by any consideration which could interrupt the primary obligation. But it did not appear to me that a promulgation of my application was necessary, as I conceived that my actions would be the strongest proofs of the rectitude of my intentions. That such was the conduct held by me in public, I desire not to be credited on my bare assertion, but with confidence I appeal to the many worthy gentlemen with whom I served in the General Assembly. They know who first moved in the House of Burgesses, for the address to his majesty, the memorial to the Lords, and remonstrance to the House of Commons; they also know what part I took in preparing those papers. For my uniform opinion and conduct in private, I safely refer to all with whom I have the pleasure of an acquaintance. Such being my principles and such my conduct long before my letters could possibly have reached England, before the act passed, and therefore before the appointment of any distributor, I leave the impartial reader to determine, with what truth and propriety it has been asserted, that my opinion of the act was not discovered until I was certain of being disappointed. But as a further confirmation, if a further is necessary, of my early determination to depart from the application I had made, no duplicates of my letters were ever sent; and by their not arriving until many months

after the appointment of distributor was made, no measure was ever taken by my friends in consequence of what I had written. From this state of the case, as exactly related, as my memory can serve me to relate the circumstances of a transaction now of twenty months standing, it will appear to every considerate and candid person, that my proceeding amounts to nothing more than the having made a hasty application, the impropriety of which was presently discovered, and a constant tenor of conduct pursued, that operated (as far as my powers could make it) to prevent my success in a point I am very untruly supposed to have wished for until I found myself disappointed. Thus much I have judged it necessary to say in justice to my character, and to say more would be trifling with the public.

"Richard Henry Lee."

The stamp act was equally unpopular in other colonies. Connecticut and New York, manifested particular abhorrence of the principle assumed in it; but Massachusetts led the northern and eastern colonies in their opposition to the measure, exhibiting an early and clear perception of its unconstitutionality, and a bold and patriotic determination to resist it. Even now, she had arisen the star of liberty in the east, which, beginning to burn brightly, afterwards continued so steadily and gloriously to illuminate the bodies around her; while Virginia to the south, was already glowing in the firmament, a "living sapphir."

The ministry were now convinced, that nothing less than military force could compel obedience to the stamp act; and the people of England began to grow tired of a measure, which without producing any practical good, had already excited much dissension, and threatened incalculable injury to the empire. The administration of Lord Grenville having become unpopular, and the king having taken offence at the manner in which the regency bill had been drawn up, could no longer sustain itself. The Marquis of Rockingham, an upright and

popular nobleman, was at the head of the new administration: he had always disapproved of the proceedings against America, and one of the first important acts of his ministry, was the repeal of the stamp act; but this was accompanied by a declaratory act, asserting the right of the mother country, "to bind the colonies in all cases whatever." The repeal, notwithstanding the declaratory act, gave great joy, especially to the south. The commercial regulations still continued in force, and the northern cities were far from being satisfied. Although Mr. Lee participated in the joy so generally expressed, he did not however cease to feel great apprehension from the spirit which appeared in the declaratory act. He constantly expressed his conviction that the absolute authority thus formally asserted, would, ere long, be again attempted in practice. Yet willing to hope for the best, he did not wish to cloud unnecessarily, the prospect of happier times. But his antipathy to the stamp act, and its friends and supporters, was as strong, as when it was hanging over the land. The following anecdote will show this, and will also exhibit his zeal, in behalf of the rights of his countrymen. His purse was at the service of his country, and in this respect, he continued throughout the revolutionary contest, to prove his readiness to sacrifice his fortune, as well as his talents and life, to promote her interests. Mr. . . . . who had been a supporter of the proceedings of the mother country, had refused to join in the general joy, on the repeal of the stamp act. This conduct was indignantly beheld, and violently resented, by a warm, perhaps indiscreet person of the name of Seers, and a verdict in an action at law, was obtained against him by this adherent of kingly power. To show their detestation of toryism, Mr. Lee, and at his suggestion, many inhabitants of the county, subscribed money *to satisfy the judgment.* A copy from the original manuscript, as written by Mr. Lee, is here inserted. It contains the signatures of the subscribers, in their own hand writing. And comparatively unimportant as it is, this list has often excited

in the breast of the author, feelings of attachment to the men, who seemed so devoted to their country. It is one of those genuine evidences of the patriotic spirit of the times, which is worthy of a place among records of apparently a more exalted character.

"In testimony of our entire approbation of the virtues and manly spirit with which Mr. John Sears, of Essex county, resented the contumacious and vicious conduct of . . . . ., in refusing to join the general joy of Virginia on the repeal of that most arbitrary, unjust, and tyrannical act imposing stamp duties in America, and utterly abhorring all principles by which he can be injured for having so acted, we agree most willingly to pay the sum of money, by each of us subscribed, to Mr. Sears, or his order, on demand, thereby to prevent the bad consequences of a late judgment obtained against him, and also to evince our attachment to the cause of liberty *by supporting its generous asserters.*

Richard Henry Lee,	20	shillings.	
James Davenport,	10	do.	
John Lee, - -	5	do.	
Jno. Martin, - -	5	do.	
Francis L. Lee, -	5	do.	more if necessary.
Richard Parker, -	5	do.	my intention is to indemnify; more if necessary.
Wm. Booth, - -	5	do.	
Thomas Ludwell Lee,	5	do.	more if necessary.
Wm. Lee, - -	5	do.	do.
Arthur Lee, - -	10	do.	do.

CHAPTER III.

The repeal of the stamp act having restored harmony between the mother country and the colonies, particularly the southern colonies, nothing occurred, during the short administration of Lord Rockingham, to excite any sensation sufficient to call into public action the talents of the leading men in Virginia. Mr. Lee, though now living more retired from public employment, still gave a close attention to the political affairs of Great Britain. He cultivated his acquaintance with gentlemen of intelligence in England, and obtained from them the earliest information on American affairs. This information he was active in communicating to his fellow-citizens by letters, conversation, and by publications. Feeling a conviction that the opinions of British statesmen, no less than the wants of the British exchequer, would lead to a repetition of the late violation of the rights of the colonies, he endeavoured to prepare the minds of the most influential men for effectual resistance.

His biographer, in tracing Mr. Lee's public course during the years 1765 and 1766, had no appropriate place in which to mention an incident in his life, of great and durable interest to himself, and of no little moment to the public good. This was his first acquaintance with the celebrated patriot and orator, Patrick Henry. From the character and principles of these two men, the reader will have anticipated the mention of the fact, that a mutual admiration of each other quickly followed, and that a warm friendship and hearty coalition on public questions soon existed between them. This was the certain consequence of the intercourse of men of such congenial feeling and similar principles. This friend-

ship and harmony of principle existed until their death. Two such men, during the period which followed, acting in close and active concert, must have had a powerful influence on the public opinions and proceedings of their native state. And, indeed, to the genius, integrity, and eloquence of these great men may be attributed, in a very considerable degree, the confessedly distinguished part which Virginia acted in the revolution. They aroused their fellow-citizens to a sense of their danger; they cheered and animated them in the dark hours of war and desolation; suggested the most efficient means of resistance; and directed the patriotism, they found so generally existing, to the wisest ends. The only subjects on which they differed, in after times, were the payment of British debts, and the necessity and propriety of making paper money a legal tender for debts contracted on the expectation of payment in coin. This difference, however, produced no abatement in their friendship, while it gave occasion to debates in the Virginia assembly, which exhibited as splendid and beautiful specimens of eloquence, as ever excited the admiration and controled the proceedings of any deliberative body, ancient or modern. Mr. Henry observed to a son of Richard H. Lee, who had the pleasure of serving a session some years afterwards with him, "your father, sir, and myself always agreed upon the great principles of freedom. We differed on some questions of internal policy, but liberty we alike fondly loved." He was not a member of the Assembly of Virginia when Mr. Lee moved the address to the king, the memorial to the lords, &c. which have been mentioned. Mr. Lee, therefore, had not his aid in carrying, through the House of Burgesses, that measure which was indisputably (at least south of Massachusetts) the first legislative opposition to the right of the mother country to tax America. Mr. Lee, although a member of the House of Burgesses in 1765, had not reached Williamsburg when Mr. Henry introduced his famous resolutions against the stamp act. He, however, heartily concurred in the propriety of

adopting them, although doubts were entertained by all the older members of the house. Both of these men were remarkable, for that decision of character which led them, thus early, through opposition and danger, to advise resistance to the mother country.

The internal concerns of the colony, at this time, engaged the attention of the House of Burgesses. The leaders of the patriotic party were anxious to weaken, by all the means in their power, the weight and influence of the court party. The office of speaker of the house and treasurer of the colony had long been united in the same person. This circumstance had always given great influence to the person holding these places, who was always an adherent of the British court. Mr. Lee, therefore, determined to make an effort to effect the separation of the two offices, and accordingly moved, "that the two offices be now separated, and be henceforth filled by different persons." His motion met with vehement opposition; he resolutely urged it, Mr. Henry advocated it, and, after a long and animated debate, the motion was adopted. This measure essentially aided the popular cause, and removed a serious obstacle to the patriotic resistance made, shortly afterwards, to the further violation of American rights.

At this time the great earl of Camden, then Lord High Chancellor of England, was known to be opposed to the principles on which the English ministry were endeavouring to impose taxes upon America. He was known, too, to cherish the most friendly sentiments towards the American people, and had always been a supporter of the popular features of the British constitution. The great and commanding talents of Lord Camden, exerted in the support of such sentiments, had endeared him to the colonies, and rendered him more popular than even Lord Chatham. With a view to strengthen the good opinion, and to ensure the exertions of this eminent statesman and lawyer in behalf of America, Mr. Lee suggested, to his friends in Westmoreland, the idea of procuring a meeting of the people of the county, to ex-

press their thanks to Lord Camden for his opposition to the stamp act, and to ask his aid in opposing all similar attempts. He also proposed to them to subscribe money enough to procure a likeness of Lord Camden, and to ask his lordship to sit for it. It was intended to place this portrait in the court-house of the county. A meeting was called and numerously attended, and Mr. Lee's propositions were unanimously adopted. The requisite sum was quickly raised, and Mr. Lee was appointed to address Lord Camden, and inform him of the resolutions of that meeting. The following is his letter to that nobleman.

WESTMORELAND, Va.

"My Lord—Wonder not, that the people, in this remote part of his majesty's dominions, revere your lordship's character; and since there is no part of the British Empire, which does not feel the influence of Lord Camden's virtues, America in particular, must ever regard your lordship, as the patron of its liberty, best possession of human nature.

Prompted by gratitude, they entreat your lordship to accept their humble thanks, and to favour them with permitting your likeness to be taken, that it may remain a memorial to posterity, of their veneration, and of the inestimable benefit derived to British America, from your lordship's protection.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and devoted servant,

Richard Henry Lee.

To the Rt. Hon. Charles Lord Camden,
Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain."

Mr. Lee was appointed to carry into effect the wishes of the people. He accordingly wrote to Mr. Edmund Jennings, a gentleman in London, of great virtue and respectability, and a friend to the colonies. His letter to that gentleman, while it shows the devotion of Mr. Lee, to the rights of America, evinces his predilection for the natives of his country. In this letter is contained,

the earliest mention, which the author recollects to have seen, of our famous countryman, West.

CHANTILLY, VA.
JUNE 1, 1767.

"DEAR SIR—I hope your goodness will pardon me, for the trouble I am going to give you. The gentlemen of Westmoreland, having a great veneration for the character of Lord Camden, particularly for his honourable support of America's liberty against the stamp act, wish much to have his lordship's picture to grace their court house. For this purpose, they have paid into my hands 76*l.* 8*s.* for which, I enclose you two bills of exchange, and beg the favour of you, to wait on Lord Camden, with the enclosed letter; which intreats his lordship's permission, to the taking of his picture. This being obtained, I must leave to your judgment, the choice of a limner, only observing that the gentlemen would prefer Reynolds, unless you think his difference in price, greater than his superiority in painting. Indeed, I cannot help observing for my part, that I think *Mr. West being an American, ought to be preferred in this matter,* if his skill should approach near to that of the best limner, as I am told it does.

I must again entreat your forgiveness, for troubling you in this affair. I thought you would not be displeased, at this testimony of our esteem for the patriot, whose virtue has saved our common country.

I am with much esteem, dear sir, your affectionate and obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TO EDMUND JENINGS,
at his Chambers, Lincoln Inn, London."

Mr. Jenings delivered Mr. Lee's letter, and the resolutions of the people of Westmoreland, to Lord Camden, who promised to comply with their request; but he deferred it so long, and on such pretences, that Mr. Jenings thought, that he deemed it prudent not to

fulfil his promise. Mr. Jenings' letters on the subject, are as follow:

"Dear Sir—As I have now but little hope of executing the commission of the gentlemen of Westmoreland, it would be improper in me, longer to detain their subscription money; and therefore, if you will draw on me at Mr. James Russel's, your bill shall be duly honoured.

I have taken much pains, be assured, to obtain Lord Camden's portrait, and am sorry for the sake of the gentlemen of Westmoreland, and for his lordship's and my own honour, that I have not succeeded. I once thought myself sure of it; but am now taught that men here, have other ambition, than to be esteemed and honoured by their fellow citizens. Should the varying politics of this country suffer his lordship at any future time, to sit to a limner, I shall take the liberty of troubling you, to induce the gentlemen of Westmoreland, to honour me with the acceptance of his portrait from me.

The newspapers here, talk of changes and a coalition of parties. I am indifferent to the first, and I think the last would be dangerous; the first would produce no change of measures, and the last would be an irretrievable confirmation of public mischief. Nothing but a new system can give comfort to the people, and honour to his majesty; and it is thought, no new systems are likely to be voluntarily adopted, but must necessarily arise from some dreadful calamity.

I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

Edmund Jenings.

London, August 17, 1768."

"Dear Sir—In my last letter to you, I expressed my concern, that I could not execute the commission the gentlemen of Westmoreland had entrusted to me. Lord Camden, after having appointed several different times for Mr. West's attending on him, hath at length, it seems, totally forgot his promise. The times are so bad, that

no man can be depended on, and therefore, although his lordship has done undoubted service to America and to England too, yet, I am not sure, if the general rumour is to be believed, but that he will adopt a system, in a line different from that, which fair fame and honest independence would mark out.*

Draw for the money, and should his lordship at any time recollect his engagement, and be worthy of your approbation and honouring, I shall beg the gentlemen, to accept from me, his portrait.

I am, your faithful humble servant,

EDMUND JENINGS."

Mr. Lee and his fellow citizens, were very anxious to have a likeness of Lord Chatham also. This was intimated to Mr. Jenings; but as Lord Chatham was at the head of the ministry, it was thought indecorous to request him to sit for it. Mr. Jenings however, had a very fine likeness of him copied, and sent it, as a present, to the people of Westmoreland, and it is still in the court-house of that county. On receiving this portrait, Mr. Lee wrote the following letter to Mr. Jenings:

CHANTILLY, VA.
MAY 31, 1769.

"DEAR SIR—The gentlemen of Westmoreland, desire me to return their hearty thanks to you, for your very genteel present of Lord Chatham's picture. It arrived in fine order, and is very much admired. They propose to place it in the court house, thinking the assembly may furnish themselves, with his lordship's picture.

The gentlemen are not without hopes, that they may yet obtain Lord Camden's portrait, as they seem very unwilling to believe, that that great man can so apostatize from a virtuous cause, so ably and invincibly defended by himself, as to put it out, even, of his own power, to make the American so much, as doubtful.

* He was mistaken.

Dr. Lee, my brother, can show you the proceedings of our last Assembly, by which, you may judge, how bright the flame of liberty burns here, and may surely convince a tyrannous administration, that honesty and epuity alone, can secure the cordiality and affection of Virginia.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE."

In the year 1767, two acts affecting the colonies passed the Parliament. One was the revenue act of '67, framed by Charles Townshend, laying *a tax on tea;* the other, was an act requiring the legislature of the colony, "to make provision for quartering a part of the regular army." Although the tax on tea was but three pence per pound, Mr. Lee quickly perceived the vicious principle assumed, and he renewed his efforts to awaken the minds of his countrymen to the dangers that threatened them from these acts, which, if once submitted to, would (to use his own words, quoted before) reduce his country to a state worse than that "of Egyptian bondage." The reconciliation produced by the repeal of the stamp act, had never been as sincere and hearty to the north, as it had been to the south, in consequence of the trade laws. The late duties on paints, glass, and tea, oppressed the commerce of the large trading towns of the northern colonies. This state of feeling was exhibited, in the proceedings of the assembly of New York. It refused obedience to the act concerning the billeting of the regular soldiery. The ministry resented this disobedience, and suspended the legislative powers of that province. This proceeding produced great sensation throughout the colonies. Mr. Lee, a watchful sentinel on the walls of freedom, immediately discerned the approach of danger, and while it was yet at a distance, he determined to make every effort, to convince his fellow subjects in Virginia, that this measure of the ministry, threatened them with equal danger. Accordingly, he moved, in the House of Burgesses, as soon as

it commenced its session, a petition to the king, stating in strong and pointed terms, the grievances under which the colonies suffered, in consequence of the proceedings against the colony of New York, and the existence of the revenue laws, and praying for a redress of them. The original draught of this petition, is in the possession of the author. The following is a letter which Mr. Lee wrote to a gentleman, of influence in England, on these subjects.

CHANTILLY, VA.
MARCH 27, 1768.

"MY DEAR SIR—'Tis a pleasing reflection to one who loves his country, that some few, at least, are to be found, who watch over the public good, and having wisdom to discern with spirit to promote, the general good, will not silently suffer encroachments to be made on the rights and liberty, of the community. My long acquaintance with you, my friend, gives me a right to number you, among such worthy citizens. It being a common observation, does not lesson the value of it, that a prudent man should lend his assistance to extinguish the flames, which had invaded the house of his next door neighbour, and not coldly wait, until the flame had reached his own. History does not more clearly point out, any fact than this, that nations which have lapsed from liberty, to a state of slavish subjection, have been brought to this unhappy condition, by gradual paces. Great Britain, it seems, having discovered the error of attempting our ruin, by one bold and general stroke, has, at length, fallen on a method of singly attacking the colonies, hoping that the others will quietly behold the destruction of one, not immediately and sensibly, connected with the rest. But, though, the billeting act is not yet enforced upon *us*, we are equally with New York in the view of that oppressive measure, *for I cannot agree to call it law.* An act for suspending the legislature of that province, *hangs, like a flaming sword,* over our heads, and requires, *by all means, to be re-*

moved. The late duties on paints and glass, though not perhaps, literally, a violation of our rights, yet as the connection between us and the mother country, renders it necessary that we should, excluding all other nations, take manufactures, only from her, in this light, the imposition becomes arbitrary, unjust, and destructive of that mutually beneficial connection, which every good subject would wish to see preserved. To obtain redress, sir, on these points, and to inform posterity what were our sentiments on them, it seems indispensably necessary, that a dutiful, decent, but firm address, should be presented to his majesty, by the Assembly, requesting his royal interposition, for the repeal of these acts. This method, you know, my friend, is constitutional. The subject, when aggrieved, has a right to appeal to the sovereign, for redress; and we have his royal word for it, (in a late speech to Parliament,) that he will equally protect the rights of all his people.

The unhappy wound,* which I received in my hand, will not yet permit me to travel, and indeed, I am sorry for it, as it would give me great pleasure to add, on this occasion, my poor assistance, to the friends of liberty, contending for their country's rights.

I am, yours with esteem, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE."

The author, while looking over a manuscript letter-book of Mr. Lee, was struck with the devotion with which he gave himself to the interest of his country. It seems to have commanded his heart with unceasing solicitude. Even in his private concerns, he never lost sight of this subject. In a letter to a merchant in London, he enclosed a list of persons in his county who had sub-

* Mr. Lee received a wound in his hand, by the bursting of a gun, while shooting swans. By this accident, he lost all the fingers of one hand. He was, however, able to go to Williamsburg, to the meeting of the House of Burgesses.

scribed for a quantity of tea; that part of the letter which relates to the *tea*, cannot fail to interest the reader. In the conclusion of it, he thus writes:

"I have been concerned to find, that your friends here are much surprised and displeased at the charge you have made of the parliamentary duty on tea. I confess it is extremely disagreeable to me, and I earnestly entreat that you, sir, whom we esteem here as our very good friend, would not lend a helping hand to deprive us of the most valuable of all possessions, our liberty. But certainly an arbitrary ministry will for ever proceed to tax and distress us, if they find the merchants will condescend to become their collectors, and so make the collection of a duty easy, which otherwise they never can get in. And I am very sure, that nothing can prevent the people here from regarding the trade as their most deadly foe, if they join in making easy of execution those oppressive acts. This act, levying a duty on paper, glass, *tea*, &c. is so unjust, and so badly contrived, that it never can be executed; and you run no risk here, however the collectors may bully and make a noise; for it is certain they do not know what to demand, *and dare not detain a ship on account of these duties.*" Here follows the subscription for the tea; the original paper, which is written by Mr. Lee, (a copy was sent to the merchant,) concludes thus: "We, who subscribe this paper, do oblige ourselves to pay to J. R. Esq. Merchant, in London, or his order, on demand, for the quantity of *tea* by each of us subscribed for. But it is on this express condition that we desire the tea to be sent, that Mr. R. does not make the charge of the late parliamentary duty on tea, as we prefer our liberty to the gratification of our palates, and do not choose to drink our destruction in a cup of tea. Given under our hands and seals, this 27th June, 1768."

It may not, perhaps, be an unpleasant interruption to the strict narrative of this Memoir, to present the reader, in this place, with some letters to Mr. Lee, from his

brother Arthur Lee, Esq.* who was, at this time, in London; and, from his intimacy with many of the leading characters in England at that day, had an opportunity of seeing and hearing every thing which had any relation to the colonies. From the first dawn of the "new colony system," the party in England which was called the "whig" or popular party, took part with the colonies. Lords Chatham, Camden, Shelburne, &c. and Horne, Dunning, Barré, were among them. Mr. Lee enjoyed the honour of the acquaintance and friendship of these persons. Hence his letters, particularly those written in the early stage of our disputes with the mother country, will be found very interesting to politicians. From no history, or collection of contemporaneous papers, can be obtained a more minute detail of the circumstances of the times; a more accurate acquaintance with the conspicuous characters of England, and with the schemes and policy of the different parties, which espoused or opposed the interests of the colonies, than from the letters of Arthur Lee to his brother. One or two of these letters will here follow: many others will be found in a subsequent part of this Memoir, and in the Appendix, No. 1.

LONDON, —— 1767.

"Tho' my dear brother's solicitude about my not frequently and freely writing to him, is exceedingly pleasing to me, as it shows he values my love, as highly as I prize his, yet I cannot acquiesce in the justice of his complaint. For considering the great attention due to the study in which I am now engaged, and the many friends to whom I am bound to write, great indulgence should be granted

* Arthur Lee was an agent in London, of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, before the Revolution. He was afterwards one of our commissioners at the court of France: he was also commissioner from the United States to Spain and Prussia. On his return to America, he was elected one of the board of treasury, and a member of Congress, for several years, from Virginia. He was one of the most learned men of his day, and an able and distinguished diplomatist.

to me, both in point of the frequency and length of my letters.* Neither, indeed, does the state of things furnish matter for much writing. The little detail of politics is too despicable to slander even your leisure hours with; and there is no probability of any change in men or measures with us.

"You will see by the last resolution of the bill of rights, which I desired our brother to send you, what hope we entertain, and what plan we have adopted, to obtain a redress of grievances. You will know the author, by the style. If the people cannot be roused to take some effectual measures at the next general election, "actum est de libertate." Mrs. M'Cauley has written to me, approving highly of the proceedings of the bill of rights. I am under some apprehension of having lost the patronage of Lord Shelburne and Col. Barré, by the part I have taken in the proceedings. Their tools conducted the attempt to dissolve the society, and destroy Mr. Wilkes, whether by their particular direction, I do not know. But as I voted against them, and as their failure has totally sacrificed the popularity of Lord Shelburne, it is not improbable, that he will consider me as a partisan against him, and therefore not entitled to his favour. They are both abroad at present; when they return, your presents shall be delivered. But, whatever may happen, I shall be satisfied with having acted honestly. The public cause, and particularly that of America, which induced me to engage in the society, was the mover of my conduct. Townsend is an opiniated, overgrown schoolboy; Horne is a malevolent, vain, petulant, impudent priest. The former, in his conceit and folly, thought he could lead the city; the other, in his vanity and knavery, conceived that his abilities were equal to Townsend's ambition, and that he should be rewarded. The event

* Mr. A. Lee was, at this time, a student of law. He became a conspicuous and successful advocate, and was in habits of intimacy with Dunning and Glynn, and was often engaged in cases with them. He had studied medicine in Edinburg, and graduated with the botanical prize.

has shown how weak their judgment was, and how impotent their endeavours were, when separated from those who gave them weight and importance with the people. They never appear in public without being hissed; and at a late meeting of the livery, there were but five who voted for recommending Mr. Townsend to the common hall, as lord mayor for the ensuing year. Lord Shelburne suffers for all their follies, and has, therefore, lost his popularity in the city. Expecting redress only from the people, I am determined to stand with them, however my particular interest might advise a different course. You know, by experience, how little profit, and how much obloquy attends such a principle; but you know, too, how much satisfaction springs from a conviction of its rectitude. The present lord mayor and Alderman Bridges will be returned by the livery, and if the aldermen choose Bridges, he will constitute the other his *locum tenens*, so that popular councils will still prevail in the city. Crosby is a plain, determined man, who courts no great man, and looks to the people for approbation and support. He will be returned next year, with Wilkes, so that the aldermen will have little to choose between them, and the liberties of the city will be upheld. I am much obliged to you for your present, duck and brandy. She appears very disconsolate without a mate. The partridges were, by mismanagement, let loose at sea, and perished in the ocean.*

The chief political object, in Europe, at present, is Russia, unless a cession of what she has conquered should procure the Turk an ignominious peace. The revolt of Egypt, will, probably, oblige the Ottoman, to sheath the Russian sword, at any price. Whether the encouraging of so tremendous a power, and especially, the promoting of the Zarina's wish of establishing a large, disciplined and formidable navy, be sound policy in us, to me, is doubtful. We may be cherishing a serpent, which will strike us to the heart.

* Mr. A. Lee was making a collection of the natural productions, &c. of America.

I do not think it in the least, probable, that any change will take place in administration, unless in consequence of a war. That is an event, which the endeavours of the present men, seconded by the disturbances and inability of France, will place at a great distance. The present men do the king's business better than he could find; why then should he change them? Most assuredly, it must be the necessity of the last extremity which will move him, to admit a single man of virtue, within the circle of his throne. An impeaching Parliament might be a more effectual remedy than a war; but there is still less expectation of this, than of that. The Lords Chatham and Shelburne, will then only come in, when it is necessary to cultivate the people, to support a war, or to sooth the rage of an impeaching House of Commons," &c. &c.

"Very melancholy, my dear brother, is the prospect of our affairs, and little apparent hope, that any attention will be paid, to the just rights of America. The present ministry, arbitrary and anti-American as they are, have for their opponents, men, who, for the most part, are despotic in their views, and who found their opposition upon the inefficacious and pusillanimous lenity of the present proceedings against the colonies. As the views of the court are unquestionably despotic, on the American question, it is sure, that those who talk in the most absolute style, are the most agreeable. Temple and Grenville are the men, I mean, with my Lord Egremont, whose principles are as inconsistent with liberty, as fire with water. The present administration is weak, because they acted as oppressors; but should this new set come in, being regarded as patriots, they will have the stronger support in subverting the constitution of America.

So circumstanced here, the cause of American liberty would be desperate indeed, if it find not a firm support, in the virtuous and determined resolution of the people of America. This is our last, our surest hope, this our trust and refuge. To encourage and invigorate this

spirit, must be the constant endeavour of every patriot, *si patriæ volumus, si nobis vivere cari.*

The Rockingham party have refused to take the lead in obtaining the repeal of the duty acts. The merchants are very averse to present any petition to Parliament for that purpose, because it is disagreeable to the ministry. Possibly they may be stirred up, before the holydays are over. They do not yet feel enough. My Lord Shelburne and his adherents, are the wisest and soundest supporters of America; but I doubt, whether they will be willing to take the lead. In a few days I go to Lord Shelburne's country seat, by express invitation, to spend some time; while there, I hope to animate him to a more vigorous advocation of our cause.

The House of Lords have passed several resolves, very violent against all the proceedings at Boston, and voted an address to his majesty, against the treasonable practices suspected there, and to bring the authors of them over here, for trial. The justice of this, they found on a statute of Henry Seventh, which by a resolve of the house, they extend to America. I will not anticipate your reflections on this proceeding. They were sent down to the Commons, and their concurrence desired; but they have deferred the consideration of them, until after the holydays. To pave the way for these measures, a very partial presentment of papers was made to the house, by the ministry; all the incendiary letters of Governor Bernard, with the most trifling occurrences of the "sons of liberty," down to their drinking the health of Paoli and the Corsicans; but the paragon of impudence, and malevolence was, a letter from the commissioners at Boston, full of misrepresentations and invective. Nothing was read on the other side, but the Boston petition; and this will be, forever, the treatment of Americans here; from whence, therefore, they are to expect neither justice nor favour.

The public liberty here, has gained a signal victory over court despotism, in the election, of Sergeant Glynn, Wilkes' friend and advocate, for this county, against all

the influence of Beauchamp Proctor, with an hired mob, bribery and ministerial influence. The party of Mr. Wilkes, is strong in the House of Commons. His having published the letter you will receive with this, prefaced by some strong animadversions, on the detestable intention of its authors, has increased the hatred of the ministry to absolute rage; in consequence of which, they procured a vote in the House of Lords, branding it as a seditious and inflammatory libel, with a conference to invite the concurrence of the Commons, but this they could not obtain, and therefore, they adjourned the question until after the holydays, when it will be abandoned. Then, too, a petition he has presented, praying to be permitted to prosecute Phllip Carteret Webb, guilty of bribery and perjury, with the public money, and to have the Lords Sandwich and March examined, touching the matter, is ordered to be heard. The Commons sent a message to the Lords, desiring that those Peers might attend in their house, which was voted a breach of privilege. The conference was held, but the Commons were firm, and the two lords were permitted to attend.

I have dined with Wilkes, in the King's Bench. He speaks very warmly of America, and highly applauds their proceedings. The Farmer's Letters are much read here, but to little purpose, though universally admired, and no answer attempted. They continue of the same opinion, without a single reason for it, and continue in obstinacy, what they began in ignorance. Lord Hillsborough told me, he was both greatly pleased and informed by them, but he wished Mr. Dickinson had accommodated his reasoning to the necessity of a supreme power. I observed, that Mr. Locke had executed that with great perspicuity. This lord is affable and plausible, has a routine of argument which he uses to every one, and on all occasions, without giving time for an answer. He appears to me to be extremely shallow, and he is detested in Ireland, for his arbitrary principles.

I send you with this, a number of the North Briton,

containing Wilkes' letter, the Public Advertiser, and two pamphlets concerning America.

I have written only two pieces published in the Gazetteer, giving an account of the proceedings at Boston, with some remarks on them. One of them is reprinted in the Gentlemen's Magazine for November. I am meditating two pamphlets, under the titles of an Address to the Merchants, and a Summary of the Arguments on both sides of the American Question. Whether I shall finish them I cannot determine. The load of prejudice seems almost immoveable, and pours despair, on all our attempts to bring this country, to reason.

My best love attend you all—my cordial good wishes await the friends of liberty, and their transactions. Once more let me remind you, that no confidence is to be reposed, in the justice or mercy of Great Britain; and that American liberty, must be entirely of American fabric.

Adieu, my dear brother,

ARTHUR LEE."*

In the year 1768, it had become evident to every person, even of ordinary sagacity, that a struggle for colonial liberty must take place. The idea was terrible, to the greater part of the people. The stoutest hearts were agitated by the anticipation. It was not so with Mr. Lee. He, even then, believed, that the colonies would be able, if united, to maintain, at least, a long and honourable effort for liberty; and that the policy of France especially, and of other European nations, would lead them to succour them. To produce unanimity so necessary to success, was the great object, which engaged, from this time, his unceasing efforts, and unwearied reflections. His biographer thinks, he can assert with the greatest truth, that Mr. Lee was the first person, who suggested the idea of corresponding committees to be organized by the legislatures of the colo-

* See further on these subjects, in his correspondence in the years '68 and '69, in Appendix, No. 1.

nies; and of corresponding clubs or societies among "the lovers of liberty, in the several states," for the purpose of informing the people, on the subject of their constitutional rights, and of giving them the earliest information of their violation; and of urging them to a timely and united resistance. His object, from this time, was independence. All the schemes, he henceforth suggested, all the measures he advised, contemplated much more than a mere redress of grievances. It has been seen that as far back as the year '64, he had hinted the idea, that "this step of the mother country, (the declaratory act of Grenville,) which was the first attack on our rights, and the fruitful parent of all the rest, though intended to oppress, and keep us low, in order to secure our dependence may be subversive of that end." The possibility, of which he spoke, appeared to him, to be rapidly approaching to a probability, that an early and judicious understanding should exist between the legislatures, and also, between the most influential men in the colonies, seemed an object of great importance; indeed, this appeared to him, the only effectual mode of producing united action, and consentaneous sentiment.

In 1773, the House of Burgesses of Virginia, about the same time with the Massachusetts Assembly, adopted the idea, and carried it into effect, by appointing a standing committee of six persons, "whose business it shall be, to obtain the most early and authentic intelligence of all such acts and resolutions of the British Parliament, or proceedings of administration, as may relate to, or affect the British colonies in America; and to keep up and maintain a correspondence and communication with our sister colonies, respecting those important considerations, and the result of their proceedings, from time to time, to lay before this house." Mr. Lee was one of this committee. The motion for its appointment, was made by Dabney Carr, Esq., a young gentleman of great promise, whose speech, on the occasion, evinced superior talents, and ardent patriotism. This mea-

sure, it has been said by historians of Britain and America, was the most efficient means of opposition, which had yet been devised to direct the energies of the people, and to produce that firm union which finally secured American liberty. Ample praise has been given to the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia, for having been the first to appoint corresponding committees. From the honour due to them as collective bodies, the author would not detract. But, for the sagacity of Richard Henry Lee, may be claimed the merit of having first suggested this measure, and of having formed private corresponding societies among the leading men of the several colonies, four or five years, before the plan was thus publicly adopted. General Gadsden, of South Carolina, a few years before his death, remarked, while addressing an assemblage of citizens on the fourth of July, that Richard Henry Lee had invited him, to become a member of a private corresponding society as early as the year '68, which, Mr. Lee informed him, he was endeavouring to establish, between the influential men in the colonies. He stated, that Mr. Lee described his object to be, to obtain a mutual pledge from the members, to write for the public journals or papers, of their respective colonies, and converse with, and inform the people, on the subject of their rights, and their wrongs, and upon all seasonable occasions, to impress upon their minds, the necessity of a struggle with Great Britain, for the ultimate establishment of independence.

In support of the honour here claimed for Mr. Lee, as being the original devisor of corresponding committees between the colonial assemblies and of private corresponding clubs, as early as the year '68, the following letter, taken from the original copy in Mr. Lee's handwriting, is presented to the reader. It was addressed to Mr. Dickinson. In it, Mr. Lee invites him, to commence a correspondence with him, and proposes the consideration of the expediency and importance of establishing corresponding committees between the several

legislatures, and an association of the friends of liberty in the colonies. In another letter written about the same time, he endeavours to enforce his opinion, that the policy heretofore pursued by the ministry, against America, would not be abandoned, although the stamp act had been repealed. He expresses his opinion, that the declaratory act, which accompanied the repeal, was, a just cause of complaint, to the colonies; and that unless its assertion of the unlimited authority "to bind America in all cases," was denied by their legislatures, "the poison, unattended by its antidote, might be used, to the destruction of the body politic."

CHANTILLY, VA.
JULY 25, 1768.

"SIR—As a friend to the just and proper rights of human nature, but particularly as an American, I acknowledge great obligation to you, for the wise and well-timed care, you have taken of our common liberty.

Whilst men in general, are thoughtless and indolent, spirit and wisdom are necessary to rouse and inform minds, that incline to what is right, and wish happiness. You, sir, on this occasion, have the honour of giving a just alarm, and of demonstrating the late measures to be, at once, destructive of public liberty, and in violation of those rights which God and nature have given us.

To prevent the success of this unjust system, an union of counsel and action among all the colonies, is undoubtedly necessary. The politician of Italy delivered the result of reason and experience, when he proposed the way *to conquest, by division.* How to effect this union, in the wisest and firmest manner, perhaps, time and much reflection, only, can show. But well to understand each other, and timely to be informed of what passes, both here and in Great Britain, it would seem that not only select committees should be appointed by all the colonies, but that a private correspondence should be conducted between the lovers of liberty in every province.

From my brother, Dr. Lee, I have been informed of the kindness, with which you have expressed your willingness to begin a correspondence with me. To effectuate this good purpose, sir, I have taken the earliest opportunity of informing you, that when you are pleased to write, your letter to me by post, directed to the care of Dr. Mortimer, Hobb's Hole, Virginia, will meet with a safe conveyance.

I am, sir, with singular esteem, your most obedient and humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To JOHN DICKINSON,
Philadelphia."

CHANTILLY, VA.
NOVEMBER 26, 1768.

"DEAR SIR,—That I might not be troublesome, is the only reason, which has hitherto prevented me from answering your agreeable favour of the first of August.*

It is greatly to be regretted that any consideration could prevail, with so potent and so flourishing a people, as those of Pennsylvania, to be silent, when the liberty of America is thus dangerously invaded; when her sister colonies are generously contending against oppression, and an *union* of the *whole*, would, infallibly establish the public freedom and security. To what purpose do her merchants toil, and her people labour for wealth, if arbitrary will, uninfluenced by reason, and urged by interest, shall reap the harvest of their diligence and industry? I wish her people may not discover, when it is too late, that the blessings of liberty, flow not from timid and selfish policy. I do not observe that your Assembly have expressed, even the least dislike to the late duty act, although all England now agrees, its

* The author regrets that he has not found Mr. Dickinson's answer to Mr. Lee's first letter. His manuscripts were, for a long time carelessly kept, and a great number of them, have been lost.

principal intention to be, to establish a precedent for American taxation, by the British Parliament.

Our long expected governor has arrived.* His lordship's good sense, affability and politeness, give general pleasure; but, how his political opinions agree with those of Virginia, remains to be known. Our late Assembly is dissolved, and writs have been issued for the choice of a new one, to meet, it is said, in May next; at which meeting, it is reported, we are to be informed, that his majesty having seen, disapproves of our objections to the late duty acts, and is determined to support the authority, and directs the act of the sixth of his own reign, commonly called the Bill of Rights, to be laid before our Assembly. It is supposed, that the silence of the House on this occasion, would be highly acceptable to government; but the propriety of being silent, is a question much agitated here. Say the *time-serving* men, "the Assembly has denied, and the king has asserted those rights, the matter ought to rest, not taking the least notice of it," and this, on a supposition, that the principle asserted, will not again be carried into execution. On the other hand, it is contended, that silence in this case must, by all the world, be deemed a tacit giving up our rights, and an acknowledgement, that the British Parliament may, at pleasure, tax the unrepresented Americans; that every kind of reason makes it probable, that destructive execution would soon follow so dangerous an admission. The facts, it seems, are these:—on the stamp act being known here, the Assembly asserted their right of exemption from British taxes; since that time, the Parliament, by an act, declare the binding force of their legislature over America, in every instance. But this act never having been laid before the Assembly by authority, and the stamp act being repealed, the bill of rights passed off unnoticed. However, the world soon saw an intention to avail themselves of this declaratory act, by the passage of the ill-judged

* Lord Bottetourt.

duty bill. To this act, the Assembly again object, and by petition, entreat his majesty's interposition, for the security of their rights, against the principles of that act. Should a new Assembly be told, that these objections were disapproved, that the authority of the British Parliament must be supported, and the bill of rights be laid before them, by the highest authority, how would silence in such a case, be construed? The reception of the act, would be registered, but no objection would follow. The poison, unattended by the antidote, may be used for the destruction of the body politic. I confess, I cannot go along with those who would derive security from submission. Is it to be supposed, that so sensible a people as the English, would disturb the peace of all North America, and endanger their most valuable trade here, for the poor purpose of establishing a principle, they never meant to execute! This, it seems to me, would be sottishness, not wisdom. When opportunity permits, I should be extremely glad to know your sentiments on these important points, for indeed, I am never so wedded to any opinion, that I cannot yield to clear and superior reason.

I am, with very particular esteem, your obedient and humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TO JOHN DICKINSON,
Philadelphia."

Mr. Dickinson, in a congenial spirit, and with correspondent sentiments, thus replies:—

"SIR—I have the pleasure to find my sentiments agreeing entirely with those expressed in your favour of the twenty-sixth of November. Claims so unreasonable in their nature, made on private persons, may be past over in silence and contempt. But in affairs of a higher dignity, transacted between different states, or different orders of the same state, the preservation of mutual respect, and the fatal tendency of precedents, seem indis-

pensibly to require objections, at once firm and respectful to be made, where the parties have a right or a cause to object. I presume, no "time-serving" gentlemen would choose, in case the declaratory act is laid before the House by government, that their silence should be construed into a contempt of the claim. As little should I imagine, would any good citizen have it attributed to fear, to a validity of the stamp act, or a want of virtue in the Assembly. Yet to one of them, will the people of England, and to another, will the people of America, attribute it. Any thing done by the Assembly, before the Parliamentary declaration of a right to bind America, in all cases whatsoever, was formally notified to them, will be regarded by the administration as waved, if that declaration is submissively received. I am credibly informed, that Lord Chatham has said, "that in the time of the stamp act, he could well say, that Great Britain could not constitutionally tax America, but that he could not well say this, since the declaratory act." It is said to be another expression of that statesman, that the administration should, on the present occasion, "pursue vigorous measures, with moderation." I apprehend, that by reversing the maxim of his lordship, we shall take the true course for promoting our own interests, that is, by pursuing moderate measures, with vigour. We are pushing a vessel against a strong stream. Over hasty zeal, will infallibly hurt us; and on the other hand, if we indolently intermit our efforts for a moment, we shall be hurried down the current. Virginia, sir, has maintained the common cause, with such attention, spirit, and temper, as has gained her the highest degree of reputation, among the other colonies. It is as much in her power, to dishearten them, as to encourage them. I suppose, all that can be apprehended from the resentment of Government, is a dissolution. A measure! that if the ministers would but consider the reign of the Stuarts, they might be sure, would only strengthen the opposition to their designs. Weak men! that mandates dictated by passion, can serve the crown, or injure the cause of

freedom among those, who value that blessing as they ought. The king's speech is throughout, a very extraordinary one. We perceive with grief, but not with despondence, that the conduct of his majesty's most dutiful subjects, has been grossly misrepresented to our excellent sovereign. The ministry no doubt, are anxious that the Parliament should be as angry, and as imprudent. as they have been. Our Assembly has sent some petition, similar to those of the other colonies.

I am, sir, with great esteem, yours, &c.

JOHN DICKINSON.

To Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE,
Chantilly, Va. January 16, 1769."

In the session of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, which followed the dates of the above letters, Mr. Lee early called the attention of that body, to the subjects discussed in them. The house adopted spirited resolutions, denying the right of the mother country, to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever, and firmly remonstrated against the act authorizing the crown, to have the inhabitants of the colonies transported to England for trial, for offences alleged to have been committed in the colonies. This act, they denounced as a direct and undisguised violation of the constitution; so strong was their language, that even "the amiable and popular Bottetourt" was offended, and dissolved the house so soon as he was informed that it had adopted such resolutions.* Thus it happened, as Mr. Lee had predicted, when he first heard of the act of the Parliament, suspending the legislative power of the province of New-York, that unless the colonies made common cause, with New York, on this occasion, the ministry would make an effort, to suppress all legislative resistance in every other colony. This was verified in Massachusets and Virginia.

The resolutions just mentioned, gave alarm and uneasiness, to many good men, both in, and out of the

* See Life of Patrick Henry, p. 86-7

house, who were opposed to the measures of the mother country. They feared the result of so strong and pointed a denial, of that, which the Parliament of England claimed as one of its fundamental rights. They believed that the ministers would not again attempt to put in practice, what they held in theory; they fondly hoped, that better counsels would yet be followed, and that the colonies would soon be restored, to their former state of constitutional liberty, and (would once more) participate in the security and glory of the parent state. This, however, was not the belief, these were not the hopes, of Mr. Lee. He anticipated no such events; and he did not fear to assert the rights of his country, even at the hazard of exciting the resentment of England. His language was, as it has been seen, "*I cannot go along with those, who would derive our security from our submission.*"* He did not shrink from a vindication of the language and principles of the resolutions; but maintained their truth and propriety, in firm and energetic language, in the following letter to Lord Shelburne, at that time one of the most distinguished statesmen of Britain.

CHANTILLY, VA.
MAY, 31, 1769.

"MY LORD—The wisdom and goodness, with which your lordship has patronised America, claims the reverence of all its inhabitants. As an individual of this country I am greatly honoured by any service that will be acceptable to your lordship; and now take the liberty to send you a Virginia almanac, and the last Virginia Gazette, containing the proceedings of our late Assembly. These proceedings my lord, may, to some, appear the overflowings of a seditious and disloyal madness: but your lordship's just and generous attachment to the proper rights and liberty of mankind, will discover in them, nothing more than a necessary and manly assertion, of social privileges founded in reason, guaranteed

* In the foregoing letter to Mr. Dickenson.

by the English constitution, and rendered sacred by a possession of near two hundred years, that is, my lord, from the first settlement of North America, until a late period. When your lordship afforded the Americans your protection, it was given to a people, who are certainly loyal, very warmly attached to their mother country, and who wish its prosperity, with unfeigned heartiness.

I have the honour to be, your lordship's
most obedient and humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

The Right Honourable the Earl
of SHELBURNE. in London."

This letter was presented to Lord Shelburne by Arthur Lee, Esq., a known and able writer on the popular side of the politics of the day, and high in the confidence of the leaders of the whig party. His letters in reply to his brother, give a very interesting account of the politics of the principal men in England, and of the prospects of America in the year 1769.

"MY DEAR BROTHER—I have received all your favours, but none with more pleasure than that of the 16th July, which assures me of your having recovered from the effects of that terrible fall. God grant that it may be the last bitter drop in your bitter cup, and that your future life may be one uninterrupted stream of happiness.

Your letter, &c., I myself presented to Lord Shelburne, at his own house, where I lately spent a week with him. He desires me to return his thanks for them. Grenville has had the art of turning the present opposition to an infamous administration, somewhat to his advantage; and by uniting with Chatham, Temple, and Rockingham, is aiming at a resumption of that power which he so much misused. With but small abilities, he has much art, so that no man has more influence in the House of Commons; he is endowed with a perseverance in the pursuit of power, never to be overcome, and ca-

pable of using any artifice, and submitting to any meanness that may promote his ambitious purposes. Upheld by these supports, nothing prevents his promotion but *the unfeigned piety* of the court, with whom *revenge is virtue.* The affront given by him to a certan lady, in the regency bill, occasioned his dismission, and will, in all probability, be an insurmountable bar to his ambition. So far is her vice, a virtue, operating the good of the nation, in the gratification of her malice. Should the complaints of the people prevail on the king to dismiss his present ministers, most probably Lord Chatham will be applied to, for the formation of a new administration. Here then will be a struggle of Lord Chatham, (as he has certainly united with Grenville,) should he insist on his admission. That the dowager's enmity would prevail over Lord Chatham's influence, is beyond a question; but policy may induce her to dissemble, (a virtue not yet banished from St. James',) and Grenville be admitted. Whether Lord Shelburne will find a place, or accept one, I cannot venture to conjecture. I think his virtues and abilities will force him into power, whether soon, or among the present abandoned crew, I cannot determine. Be this as it may, I think he is the only one attached to us from principle; from policy, there are many against opposing us; as Lord Chatham, Richmond, and Rockingham. Temple and Grenville are our determined foes; but whether they will not think it policy to let our rights remain unquestioned, is doubtful. As I perceived, it was likely they would come in, if at all, on popular grounds, I have laboured much to make the cause of America popular, in which, if I had been assisted by the American agents, I have not the least doubt of having succeeded. But the only duty an American agent has to do, is to make a very formal and humble visit to White Hall, with any paper his Assembly sends him—He leaves it to the pleasure of the minister, and thinks his duty is done—'Tis not all, who will do even this paltry service; and Mr. Abercrombie has not condescended to take the least

notice of the order of council for co-operating with the agent. What reason has America to expect any thing further, when by far the greater number of her agents are unknown here, of no abilities, no rank, or if of any, of a bad character; some of them, menial ploughmen, all of them, servile expectants.

Mr. Jenings intended the picture he sent you as a present, and is therefore offended that it is mentioned publicly as a purchase with the subscription money, which is still in his hands. As there is no probability of getting Lord Camden to sit, I could wish the subscribers to be prevailed on to order Lord Shelburne's to be sent, in gratitude for his having divided the lords in favour of their rights. He, I think, will have no objections to gratifying us, for his principles remain unaltered. You will see our agent on the most infamous list of voters for Colonels Lutterel and Brentford, than which nothing can more demonstrate his servile dependence on administration; when applied to, he refused to draw up for the tobacco merchants, a petition against the revenue acts, on a pretence, that as they had not treated him with respect, he would not have any thing to do with them. But his vote will explain his refusal. Should this conduct have any influence in Virginia to his prejudice, as I think in truth, it ought, I need not tell you I should be happy to serve in his place. If Mr. Nicholas would join you, one would imagine the point would be carried. It would certainly enable me to get into parliament, and by that method, promote the interest not only of Virginia, but of all America. Had I been in this character a year ago, I could have made the cause of America the cause of Middlesex, for they are in truth, the same. As nothing is more in my wish than this cause, I should like to have my inclinations seconded by my situation, which, as agent of the Assembly, would be certainly effected.

Yours affectionately,

ARTHUR LEE.

IPSWICH, September 18th, 1769."

"DEAR BROTHER.—I wrote to you lately, and probably the same conveyance will bring you this letter. It is with much pleasure I can assure you, that Lords Shelburne, Chatham, and Camden, are determined to unite once more in supporting the cause of America against the present weak and wicked administration. I am at present at Lord Shelburne's, in the country, and you may depend on what I say concerning our friends. Every day makes our cause more popular, and I think the ministry will find the opposition too strong to attempt any forcible measure; and you well know how little their artifices will avail them. I have endeavoured, by mixing popular subjects here, with that of America, to bring the signature of Junius Americanus into estimation, and by that means to gain a more easy ear to the discussion of American grievances—I am in hopes of succeeding. Colonel Barré is of opinion, that America stands on excellent ground, and need not be in the least apprehension of what her enemies can do. I have just heard from our brother William that the election has been patriotic, and that . . . . . has met with the contempt and detestation he merits. My heart is at ease, and I trust we must be free. I think myself much honoured by the name of Virginia, and feel infinite gratitude to the people at large, for the noble spirit with which they have resisted all the attempts of art, and honoured the cause of liberty.

I do not know any thing which would gratify my wishes more, than the agency of Virginia. I should devote myself with so much cordiality to its duties, and obey with so much joy, the commands of a spirited people asserting their rights.

Farewell, and believe me as I am ever,

Yours affectionately,

ARTHUR LEE.

BOW WOOD, December 3d, 1769."

Such was the state of politics in England when the resolutions of the Virginia Assembly were received, and

the effect which they produced on the most temperate of the colonies, may be seen from the following letter, addressed to Mr. Lee, by that wise and virtuous patriot, Mr. Dickinson.

"Sir—I am very much obliged to you for the papers sent by Mr. Wormley, and sincerely congratulate you, on the noble conduct of your colony. Administration and its unjust tools are certainly prompted, by as detestable a spirit, and directed by as despicable a policy, as ever distracted the British empire. If they have the least virtue or wisdom slumbering in them, I think, it must be roused by reading your resolves and address. But, indeed, from them, we are not to look for justice; our own integrity and prudence must be our guardian; and, if the other colonies persevere, as I hope they will, in emulating the generous example given them, in Virginia, tyranny and folly will, unquestionably, have cause to deplore their shameful and contemptible efforts to extinguish American liberty. I make no doubt, sir, but that it will give you particular pleasure, as you could scarcely expect it, that your ardor has warmed, even this most temperate province. It was, once, the interest of particular men, that this colony should make a great bustle about small matters. It then raged with patriotism. It is now the interest of the same men, that it shall promote submission to administration. It therefore sleeps, lulled by loyalty. The troublesome vigilance and vigour of our neighbours, have repeatedly made us yawn, and give a forced and feeble assent to what they were doing. If you proceed, I do not know but that we shall get quite awake, notwithstanding the large doses of opium, that have been administered to us. Certain it is, that in the last letters written to England, by a committee of merchants, they applaud your behaviour; and yet in that committee there are many persons, who are very fond of public tranquillity. Perhaps these people approved these letters, as believing they would not be published; but I think their join-

ing in them proceeds from the general approbation of your measures. Our Assembly, indeed, are too humble subjects to give administration any cause to think, they will encourage any discontents on this continent. And therefore though they had an opportunity of taking the lead, as Virginia had done in opposition to some of the vilest acts of despotism, that ever violated the rights of America, yet meekly and peaceably the good men, having well provided against the *trespassing spirit of encroaching hogs*, left the most dangerous and daring outrages against the liberty of themselves, uncensured and unnoticed. Quite different has been the conduct of the Assembly of the lower counties. In a conversation with one of the principal members of that house, we were of opinion, that it would be a just mark of respect to your Assembly, to adopt your resolves verbatim. This has been done; and I hope every Assembly on the continent will concur with you. We shall come in, in the eleventh hour.

I am, sir, with great esteem, &c.

JOHN DICKINSON,
Philadelphia, June 22, 1769.

To Col. RICHARD LEE."

IN the session of 1769, Mr. Lee was chairman of the committee of courts of justice. To it many important subjects were referred, which did not relate directly, to the administration of justice. The industry with which Mr. Lee laboured in any business assigned to him, made him one of the conspicuous amongst those who were denominated "business men." From the beginning of his active career in the Assembly, he had exhibited a rare combination of genius, patience, and labour; thus early preparing himself for those cares, and toils in the committees of the Continental Congress, for the endurance of which, he was as confessedly remarkable, as he was for his wisdom and ability. During this session, he brought in a report, on the subject of opening and improving the navigation of the River Potomac, as far as Fort Cumberland, as it was then called. This re-

port is here mentioned, not only because it exhibits judgment, and a practical knowledge of the statistical advantages of the country, but because the subject of internal improvement, has become justly popular and interesting. The very object of Mr. Lee's report is at this moment, likely to become a national one, and of incalculable benefit to a large portion of the country. It is believed that Mr. Lee was the first person who digested any plan of the kind, in this country; certainly the first who formed a plan, for the improvement of the navigation of the Potomac River, as high up as Fort Cumberland.

CHAPTER IV.

The address and resolutions (as has been stated) so alarmed the governor of Virginia, as to induce him to dissolve the House of Burgesses. But this measure had not the same effect in this case, as in that of the dissolution of the legislature of New York. The leaders of the House of Burgesses, had already denied the authority of Parliament, and were now preparing their minds to resist it; among them Mr. Lee was still distinguished for the energy, perseverence, and boldness with which he asserted the rights of the colonies.

As soon as the governor had dissolved the Assembly, the members convened at a private house. They drew up articles of association, binding themselves not to import British manufactures, or to use them, while the revenue acts remained in force, and earnestly exhorted the people to pursue a similar course. Mr. Lee was active in bringing about this measure. By his example and persuasion, he procured an extensive and hearty co-operation in this very efficient method of resistance. The non-importing association spread extensively throughout the colony, and the people adhered to its prohibitions and endured with admirable patience, the diminution of the luxuries, and even the comforts of life to which it subjected them. Mr. Lee in his own person and in his family, adhered strictly to the articles of the Association ; and was as active and vigilant in watching those, whom he suspected of a reluctant acquiescence to the object, for which it had been formed, as he was fearless in exposing any violation that he detected, for it was the duty of every member so far as in his power, to see that no designed breach of the pledges given by the members, should pass unpunished.

The articles of association were kept with patriotic fidelity throughout the colonies; and, as those who suggested the scheme had predicted, the suspension of the trade to the colonies created, in England, a powerful opposition to the measures of the ministry. This ought to have been sufficient to arrest them in their blind and haughty career. Folly itself might have been taught to think, but theirs seems to have been mingled with madness. "Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat."

Mr. Lee, prior to the period when the idea of non-intercourse was thus reduced to a system, had resolved not to import for his own use any article of luxury or comfort, while the duty acts remained unrepealed. To the domestic loom he had recourse for clothing for himself and family; and for "wine and oil," he resorted to his own hills. In the following letter to the celebrated Dr. Fothergill, of London, written about this time, the reader will find Mr. Lee, presenting to an English whig, and a friend of America, (towards whom Mr. Lee's heart ever warmed) a sample of wine, which a principle of liberty had extracted from the native grape of his country.

"CHANTILLY, VA. MAY, 1769.

SIR—Your general humanity deserves the esteem of all; but permit me to say, sir, that *your particular kindness to Americans* claims their reverence and gratitude. When, therefore, my brother, Dr. Lee, informed me that you wished to have some wine from our native grape, I lost no time in procuring the best for you. Captain Johnson will deliver you a small cask, together with a few bottles of older wine. The first is of last year's vintage, and that in bottles is several years old. This wine is, at present, of the true flavour of our grape, and is very gently acid, a quality natural to this fruit. I wish the season, and the heat of the tobacco load, may not injure it.

I am, with very singular esteem, sir, your most humble and obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Dr. FOTHERGILL, London."

The regulations of the non-importing association, continue to be strictly and patriotically observed, during the years 1770 and '71. Mr. Lee did not permit his mind to relax its attention to the affairs of the colonies. He kept a constant correspondence with his brother Arthur Lee, and other gentlemen in England, diligently diffusing every information he could obtain, which bore any relation to the interests of the colonies. So long as the duty acts continued in force, he exhorted his fellow citizens to endure every trial and deprivation, rather than encourage a commerce which flourished most vigorously when their liberties were most strongly violated.

The prospects of the colonies were bright or gloomy, as statesmen of different political opinions and connexions were called, by the king, to the administration. Hence the political changes, and even intrigues of those days, were deeply important to the people of America; and are, even now, interesting, since they form links in that chain of events, which led to our long and successful struggle. The following letters cannot fail, then, to entertain the reader, and to afford matter for political reflection. They form a part of the correspondence which Mr. Lee carried on, at this time, with a view to inform his fellow citizens on their political concerns, and to prepare them for the crisis which he saw approaching.

"My dear Brother—Colonel Barré is just arrived here, and informs me that Governor Bernard is to be before the king and council, agreeable to the Massachusetts' petition, with a view to deceive the world into a belief of his innocence, not to make any inquiry into his guilt. With this view, *only six days' notice is given to the agent to summon his witnesses, three thousand miles distant.* The wickedness of this administration can be equalled only by its weakness. For must not this be most egregious, to expect the world will be deceived by so infamous an artifice. The agent has delivered a petition to the council for a delay; whether that will succeed, I know not, but it will render their injustice more

glaring. He is an upright, spirited, and independent old man, and therefore most obnoxious to Lord H——gh, who has made some mean attempts to injure him. The ministry has so affronted the Duke of Rutland, as to make him resign. It is expected the Marquis of Granby will follow him. 'Tis well they are so rash, as abler men, in these times of corruption, might endanger our liberties.

I find my health better than when with you. I pray heaven to guard you.

Yours—Adieu.

ARTHUR LEE.

BATH, November 9th, 1769."

"LONDON, MAY 20th, 1770.

MY DEAR BROTHER—The Parliament being now prorogued, concludes all hopes of any redress of grievances, either for America or Great Britain. Several motions were, a week ago, made in the Commons, and repeated in the Lords, by Mr. Burke and the Duke of Richmond, tending to censure all the measures of this administration, relative to America, especially my Lord Hillsborough's rescinding and promising letters. They were all rescinded in the lump, by a previous question, on which the ministerial majority was three to one. Lord Chatham has made two remarkable motions this session, one for dissolving the Parliament, and one censuring those who advised the rejection of the London remonstrance. They were fruitless, being rejected by a great majority. No ministry ever had less argument, and greater influence.

In the American debate, Lord Hillsborough declared that all hopes of reconciliation with America were vain, unless the whole authority of Parliament was given up, for that it was the navigation act we were aiming to overthrow. Such are the fixed impressions of this dull, arbitrary lord, and the prejudices which he and his tools labour, but too successfully, to infuse into others.

The city of London, unawed by their late rejection,

has voted a second remonstrance to the throne, in very spirited terms, which is to be presented next Wednesday.

Mr. Wilkes sits and acts as alderman, with great applause. The friends of America here, are apprehensive that you will not abide by your non-importation agreements, on which all prospects of a re-establishment of our invaded rights depends. I can hardly think that my countrymen can be so wanting to themselves, as to give their enemies their wish, and sacrifice for a temporary profit or convenience, the liberties of themselves and their posterity. Adieu,

Yours, &c.

ARTHUR LEE."

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Lord Hillsborough is out. The ostensible cause is, that he dissented to the establishment of a government where our petition is located. But the true reason is, that the Bedford party were determined to remove him, to provide for one of themselves. But in this they were disappointed, for Lord North threatened to resign. They were obliged to sooth him by the appointment of his half-brother, Lord Dartmouth. This place was originally promised him, but the king, as his custom is, deceived him; and it is thought rather shabby in him to accept of it now. However, he is a man of good principles, of a fair character, of exemplary life, and a friend to America. I have no doubt, but that as far as it depends upon him, which indeed is but little, the colonies will not have much cause to complain.

There is no opposition now, nor any forming. At the meetimg of the next Parliament, the leaders will hope that the memory of their former follies may be obliterated, and again unite in that opposition which they so shamefully abandoned. Nothing is more uncertain than the revolutions of states, nor can any one form a tolerable conjecture from the appearances of the political sky. This is our only comfort in the midst of a calm which seems to resign every thing to the will of a court, which

is meditating and executing a systematic destruction of our liberties.

I expect to be at the bar, quite in time for the next general election, and to be employed in some contested election, which is a fair introduction into a valuable branch of the profession, that of pleading before the House of Commons.

Yours, &c.
ARTHUR LEE."

To add to the wrongs and grievances under which the colonies were now labouring, the Parliament determined, in the year 1772, to establish in the provinces, courts, with admiralty jurisdiction and powers. Before these courts, suits were to be tried at the instance of the crown. As the trial by jury was not a part of their proceedings, and the judges were to be appointed by the crown, the property of the colonists would become, in all probability, a sacrifice to unconstitutional law, arbitrarily imposed, rigidly construed, and tyrannically enforced. This measure excited serious apprehensions, and the indignation of the popular leaders of the colonies. Mr. Lee, as usual, directed his whole attention to this fresh violation of the rights of the country. As soon as the House of Burgesses met, he moved the following resolutions:

"That an humble and dutiful petition be presented to his majesty, entreating that his majesty would be graciously pleased to take into his royal consideration, the grievances under which his faithful subjects in Virginia, continue to labour, by having their property daily taken from them by laws, to which they have never consented, either personally, or by their representatives; by being subjected to the decision of distant and arbitrary courts of admiralty, when trial by jury, the surest support of property is denied, by which means his majesty's ever dutiful subjects of Virginia, are deprived of those great and fundamental rights, which they, and their ancestors, have conceived, until lately, to be their unalienable

rights; their constitutional rights, as subjects of the British Empire, and their right by charter, granted to the first settlers of this country, by his majesty's royal ancestors, kings of England. That to restore the happiness and security of his majesty's faithful subjects of this colony, his majesty will be graciously pleased to recommend to his Parliament, the repeal of the acts lately passed, for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, and for subjecting American property to the determination of admiralty courts, where the constitutional trial by jury is not permitted, but where distance and interest conspire to ruin the innocent."

In the same year, an occurrence took place in Rhode Island, which awakened the vengeance of the ministry. The people of Providence, in that state, indignant at the manner, in which the officer of the port executed the provision of the duty acts, seized and burned the Gaspie schooner, having on board merchandise, on which the duties were charged, and the use of which, was prohibited by the non-importing association of that town. A court to inquire into the circumstances of the case was constituted. However indefensible the act was on the part of the people, it is indisputable, that it did not authorize the extraordinary, extra-judicial, and military court thus established. The act of 1769, authorizing "to apprehend persons in America, and convey them to England for trial," contrary to every principle of the English constitution, was now, for the first time, to be carried into execution. This atrocious violation of the rights of the colonies, did not fail to excite the indignation and denunciations of Mr. Lee. So soon as he heard of the establishing of this court, he commenced a correspondence with his friends to the north, whom he had before enlisted in a corresponding club, and requested information on the nature, object, and powers of the court of inquiry. He diffused widely the information received, and endeavoured to awaken his fellow citizens to their danger, and prepare them for a struggle, which he now declared to be the duty of the colonies,

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it would best serve their purpose of oppression and tyranny. How necessary, therefore, that *all* should be early acquainted with the particular circumstances of *each*, in order, that the wisdom and strength of the *whole*, may be employed upon every occasion. We have heard of bloodshed, and even civil war, in our sister colony of North Carolina; and how strange is it, that the best account we have of that tragical scene, should be brought to us from England.

This province, and this town especially, have suffered a great share of ministerial wrath and insolence. But, God be thanked, there is, I trust, a spirit prevailing which will not submit to slavery. The compliance of New York in making annual provision for a military force designed to carry acts of tyranny into execution, the timidity of some, and the silence of others, are discouraging. But the active vigilance, the manly generosity, and the steady perseverance of Virginia and South Carolina, give us reason to hope, that the fire of true liberty and patriotism, will at length spread itself through the continent; the consequence would be, the acquisition of all we wish for. The friends of liberty in this town, have lately made a successful attempt to obtain an explicit political sentiment of a great number of the towns of this province, and the number is daily increasing. The very attempt was alarming to our adversaries, and the happy effects of it, mortifying to them. I would propose it for your consideration, whether the establishment of committees of correspondence among the several towns in every colony, would tend to promote that general union, upon which the security of the whole depends. The reception of the truly patriotic resolves of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, gladden the hearts of all who are friends to liberty. Our committee of correspondence had a special meeting on the occasion, and determined to circulate immediately, printed copies of them, in every town in the province, in order to make them as extensively useful as possible. I am desired by them, to assure you of their venera-

tion for your most ancient colony, and their unfeigned esteem for the gentlemen of your committee. This indeed, is a poor return—I hope you will have the hearty concurrence of every Assembly on the continent. It is a measure which will be attended with great and good consequences. Our General Assembly is dissolved, and writs will soon be issued, according to the charter, for a new Assembly, to be holden the last Wednesday in May next. I think I can almost assure you, there will be a return of such members as will heartily co-operate with you in your spirited measures. The enormous stride in erecting what may be called a court of inquisition in America, is sufficient to excite indignation in every heart capable of feeling.

I am expecting an authentic copy of that commission, which I shall send to you by the first opportunity, after I have received it. The letter from the new secretary of state to the governor of Rhode Island, which, possibly you may have seen in the newspapers, may be depended upon as genuine. I received it from a gentleman of the Council of that colony, who took it from the original. I wish the Assembly of that province had acted with more firmness than they have done; but as the court of inquiry is adjourned, they may possibly have another trial. I have a thousand things to say to you, but am prevented from want of time, having had but an hour's notice of the sailing of this vessel. I cannot conclude, however, without assuring you, that a letter from you, as often as your leisure admits, would lay me under great obligations.

I am, sir, in strict truth, your humble servant,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq."

It has been seen already, that Mr. Lee had, several years before the year 1773, suggested the idea, not only of corresponding committees between the friends of liberty in the several colonies, but of such committees between the colonial legislatures. In the spring session

of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, in the year '73, the House adopted several resolutions, declaring the expediency of such committees between the legislatures of the colonies, and urging upon them the adoption of the measure. These resolutions appointed persons to act as such a committee, and Mr. Lee was one of them. Beside the general and standing instructions, the special instruction was given to them "that they do, without delay, inform themselves of the principles and authority, on which was constituted a court of inquiry, said to have been lately held in Rhode Island, with power to transport persons accused of offences committed in America, to places beyond the seas."

Mr. Lee, as it has been shown, had been seeking for information on this subject. In the following correspondence with Mr. Dickinson, (as a member of the committee,) he informs him of the institution of the committee of correspondence, and begs for information, on the subject of the court of inquiry in Rhode Island. He reiterates his opinion, stated in his first correspondence with that gentleman, of the great importance of the adoption of corresponding committees between the several legislatures.

"CHANTILLY, VA.
APRIL 4, 1773.

SIR—I should not have been silent so long, if any important considerations had made writing necessary. In this quarter, much alarm has been created by a new court of criminal jurisdiction, which it is said, has lately been opened in Rhode Island. Neither the power, nor the object of this court, have been perfectly understood here; but in general, we have understood, that it was designed to put into execution the dangerous advice of the two Houses of Parliament in 1769, to seize obnoxious Americans, and convey them to England for trial. When our Assembly met lately, they were not furnished with proper documents on this subject. But they have now adopted a measure, which from the beginning,

they should have fixed on, as leading to that union and perfect understanding with each other, on which the political salvation of America depends. I have enclosed you, that part of our Journal, which relates to that matter. You will observe, sir, that full scope is given, to a large and thorough union of councils, though our language is so contrived, as to prevent the enemies of America, from hurrying this transaction into the vortex of treason, whither they have carried every honest attempt to defend ourselves, from their tyrannous designs, to destroy our constitutional liberty. I hope sincerely, that every colony on the continent, will adopt these committees of correspondence and inquiry. I should be much obliged, sir, with your sentiments on the Rhode Island court, and with the knowledge you have, of its powers and object.

I am, sir, with great esteem, your most obedient and humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To JOHN DICKINSON,
Philadelphia."

[*Mr. John Dickinson's Reply.*]

"SIR—I am greatly obliged to you, for your favour of the 4th of last April. The measure adopted by your Assembly for promoting correspondence among the colonies, is certainly very prudent, and I doubt not, would be very successful, if every colony was influenced by the same well directed undeviating zeal, for the liberty and happiness of America, that actuates the Assembly of Virginia. Some good I hope will result from your generous attention to the interests of those colonies, however inattentive several may be to their best interests, blessing, and freedom.

As to the proceedings in Rhode Island, they are the most insulting violations of the rights of Americans, that could be devised. Some time in February last, I think, I received a letter from several gentlemen of that place,

who were appointed by their Assembly to answer a message of their governor, containing paragraphs of a letter from Lord Dartmouth. From these it appears that the court to be appointed in Rhode Island, was formed "for inquiring into, and making report to his majesty, of all the circumstances, relative to the attacking, plundering, and burning the Gaspie schooner, for delivering the offenders to the care and custody of Rear Admiral Montague, or to the commander in chief of all his majesty's ships in Ameria, for the time being, to be brought to England for trial, calling upon Generel Gage, who is to hold himself in readiness to send troops, &c." The paragraphs do not give any express authority to the commissioners to arrest and commit, "his majesty depending, (as the letter says) upon the care and vigilance of the chief magistrates, to take the proper measures for arresting and committing, &c." Lord Dartmouth's letter does not mention, whether the supposed offence is committed within the body of the county, or within the jurisdiction of the admiralty courts; and therefore the intention of administration is concealed, whether the prisoners are to be tried under the twenty-eighth of Henry VIII. "for an offence committed on the seas," or under the thirty-fifth of Henry VIII. "for an offence beyond the seas." I am informed that the Gaspie was burnt within the body of the county; of this being the fact, there is no reason to believe the ministry were ignorant; and as little to believe that their resolution was fixed, to have the accused tried in England, wherever the vessel was destroyed

I am, Sir, with the sincerest esteem,
your most humble servant,
JOHN DICKINSON.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq."

The discontents every where manifested in the colonies, at the duty acts, had induced Lord North, to advise their repeal. They were repealed with the exception of the duty on tea. This measure failed to

produce the effects expected by the minister. The principle of arbitrary taxation, to recognize which, this duty was retained, was utterly repugnant to the ideas of freedom at this time prevailing. The reader is well acquainted with the fact, that to show their determination to resist this principle, the people of Boston threw an immense quantity of this article into the sea. This step gathered to thicker concentration, the elements of the storm of civil commotion, which had been so long lowering. The ministry, supported by the prevalent temper of the people of England, poured out their wrath upon the town of Boston, and an act was passed, shutting up its port. The following very interesting letter from Arthur Lee, Esq. to his brother, contained the earliest authentic intelligence of the passage of this act. This letter contains a well drawn character of Lord North, and of his administration, and sound and timely advice, respecting the course to be pursued by Mr. Arthur Lee's countrymen.

"LONDON, March 18th, 1774.

Dear Brother—The affairs of America are now become very serious; the minority are determined to put your spirit to the proof. Boston is their first object.

On Monday, the 14th, it was ordered in the House of Commons, that leave be given to bring in a bill, "for the immediate removal of the officers concerned in the collection and management of his majesty's duties of customs from the town of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in North America; and to discontinue the landing and discharging, lading and shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandise, at the said town of Boston, or within the harbour thereof."*

If the colonies, in general, permit this to pass unnoticed, a precedent will be established for humbling them

* Many native Americans, who were at this time in London, presented a petition to Parliament in behalf of their countrymen in Boston, against the operation of this act. It was written by Arthur Lee. See App. No. 2.

by degrees, until all opposition to arbitrary power is subdued. The manner, however, in which you should meet this violent act, should be well weighed. The proceedings of the colonies, in consequence of it, will be read and regarded as manifestoes. Great care, therefore, should be taken, to word them unexceptionably and plausibly. They should be prefaced with the strongest professions of respect and attachment to this country; of reluctance to enter into any dispute with her; of the readiness you have always shown, and still wish to show, of contributing, according to your ability, and in a constitutional way, to her support; *and of your determination to undergo every extremity, rather than submit to be enslaved.* These things tell much in your favour with moderate men, and with Europe, to whose interposition America may yet owe her salvation, should the contest be serious and lasting. In short, as we are the weaker, it becomes us to be *suaviter in modo*, however we may be determined to act *fortiter in re.* There is a persuasion here, that America will see, without interposition, the ruin of Boston. It is of the last importance to the general cause, that your conduct should prove this opinion erroneous. If once it is perceived that you may be attacked and destroyed, by piecemeal, *actum est*, every part will, in its turn, feel the vengeance which it would not unite to repel, and a general slavery or ruin must ensue. The colonies should never forget Lord North's declaration in the House of Commons, that he would not listen to the complaints of America, until she was at his feet. The character of Lord North, and the consideration of what surprising things he has effected towards enslaving his own country, makes me, I own, tremble for ours. Plausible, deep, and treacherous, like his master, he has no passions to divert him, no pursuits of pleasures to withdraw him from the accursed design of deliberately destroying the liberties of his country. A perfect adept in the arts of corruption, and indefatigable in the application of them, he effects great ends by means almost magical, because they are unseen. In four years, he

has overcome the most formidable opposition in this country, from which the Duke of Grafton fled with horror. At the same time, he has effectually enslaved the East India Company, and made the vast revenue and territory of India, in effect, a royal patronage. Flushed with these successes, he now attacks America; and certainly, if we are not firm and united, he will triumph, in the same manner, over us. In my opinion, a general resolution of the colonies to break off all commercial intercourse with this country, until they are secured in their liberties, is the only advisable and sure mode of defence. To execute such a resolution, would be irksome at first, but you would be amply repaid, not only in saving your money, and becoming independent of these petty tyrants, the merchants, but in securing your general liberties. You are, however, more capable of judging what is proper and practicable. My great wish is to see you firm and united.

Adieu. Your's affectionately,

ARTHUR LEE."

When the intelligence of the passage of the act above mentioned reached Virginia, the House of Burgesses was in session. It immediately passed several resolutions, in very bold terms, against it. They made an order, that the members should attend in their seats, on the first day of June, the day on which the act was to take effect; and that that day should be observed as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

The governor, so soon as he heard that such an order had been made, dissolved the House. Upon the arrival of the intelligence of the Boston port bill, Mr. Lee prepared several resolutions of stronger language, than had yet been used by any legislative body in America. And intended to have offered them, on the morning after the vote of the order for a fast, but the dissolution of the House frustrated the design. It will be believed, from the spirit of the time, that his resolutions would have been adopted. When the House was dissolved,

Mr. Lee advised that the members should assemble, and as representatives of the people, at once recommend the meeting of a general Congress. The members generally, were disposed to pursue a more cautious, or (which is frequently mistaken for such,) a more dilatory proceeding. An address to the people was drawn up, in which they denounced the measures of Parliament, as intended, and well calculated to subvert their constitutional liberties. They particularly reprobated the act for shutting up the port of Boston, "in their sister colony" of Massachusetts, "as a dangerous attempt to destroy the constitutional liberty and rights of all British America." They recommend to their committee of correspondence, "that they communicate with the committees of other colonies, upon the expediency of appointing deputies from the several colonies of British America, to meet at such place, as should be most convenient, there to deliberate on those general measures, which the *united* interests of America, may, from time to time require." The address is from the pen of Mr. Lee, and contains the sentiments of the resolutions which he intended to have offered in the House of Burgesses; besides recommending among other subjects for the consideration of the proposed general meeting of deputies, a consideration of the best means to stop the *exports* from the colonies, to the mother country. This passage of the address, is in these words, "that deputies be appointed from the several colonies, to consider and determine upon ways the most effectual, to stop the exports from North America; and to adopt such other methods, as shall be most decisive for securing the constitutional rights of America, against the systematic plan formed for their destruction." The idea of stopping the exports from the colonies, as far as the author can ascertain, derives from Mr. Lee.

The following letter to Samuel Adams, Esq., written shortly after the act for shutting up the port of Boston had gone into operation, relates the proceedings of the House of Burgesses, after the dissolution, and contains

a copy of the resolutions which Mr. Lee intended to have offered to the House. The correspondence of these two great men, and eminent patriots, will be read with increasing interest, as the reader approaches the period of battle and bloodshed.

[*Letter of R. H. Lee, to Samuel Adams.*]

"CHANTILLY, VA.
JUNE 23, 1774.

SIR—I did myself the pleasure of writing to you, from this place, before my departure for our Assembly, in May last, and again, from Williamsburg, immediately after our dissolution, enclosing the order for a fast, which produced that event; and an account of the subsequent conduct of the members, after the political death inflicted on them. The day before we were dissolved, I had prepared a set of resolutions, the two last of which, were thus expressed:

"*Resolved*, That the blocking up, or attempting to block up the harbour of Boston, until the people there shall submit to the payment of the taxes imposed upon them, without the consent of their representatives, is a most violent and dangerous attempt to destroy the constitutional liberty and rights of all British America.

"*Resolved*, That . . . . . be appointed deputies from this House, to meet at . . . . . such deputies from the other colonies as they shall appoint, there to consider and determine on ways the most effectual to stop the exports from North America, and for the adoption of such other measures, as may be most decisive, for securing the rights of America against the systematic plan formed for their destruction."

I have not a remaining doubt that these resolutions would have been agreed to, had they been proposed. I was prevented from offering them, by many worthy members, who wished to have the public business first finished, and who were induced to believe, from many conversations they had heard, that there was no

danger of a dissolution, before it had happened. It seems government were alarmed at the spirit which the order for a fast denoted, and fearing the consequences, interposed a dissolution. The consequent conduct of the members, was surely much too feeble, in opposition to that very dangerous and alarming degree, to which despotism had advanced. So thinking, I did propose to the dissolved members, the plan of a general Congress; but they made a distinction, between their then state, and that, when they were members of the House of Burgesses. Most of the members, and myself among the rest, had left Williamsburg, before your message from Boston had arrived. Twenty-five of them, however, were assembled to consider of that message, and they determined to invite a general meeting of the whole body, on the first of August, to consider the measure of stopping the exports and imports. Since that, an Indian invasion of our frontier, has compelled the calling a new Assembly, for which purpose, writs, returnable to the eleventh August, are now out, at which time, it is thought the House will meet; when, I think, there is no manner of doubt, they will directly adopt the most effectual means in their power, for obtaining a redress of grievances. In the mean time, the sense of some counties is taking, and two have already declared their desire to stop the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and the West Indies, and this colony. It seems very clear to me, that there will be a general agreement. Do you not think, that the first most essential step for our Assembly to take, will be an invitation to a general Congress, as speedily as the nature of things will admit, in order that our plan, whatever it may be, may be unanimous, and therefore effectual. I shall be in Williamsburg the first of August, and shall continue there until the meeting of Assembly on the eleventh. It will be exceedingly agreeable to me, to know your sentiments fully, on this most important subject. I am sure it will be of real consequence to the cause of liberty, that your committee of correspondence write fully your sentiments to ours,

at the same time. It will be well, so to time the matter, as that your letters may be in Williamsburg before the first of August, at which time, a meeting of the late representatives will take place, notwithstanding the return of the writs to the eleventh instant.*

I hope the good people of Boston will not loose their spirits under their present heavy oppression, for they will certainly be supported by the other colonies; and the cause for which they suffer, is so glorious, and so deeply interesting to the present, and future generations, that all America will owe, in a great measure, their political salvation to the present virtue of Massachusetts Bay. I am, sir, with very singular regard,

Your most obedient,
and humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To SAMUEL ADAMS, Esq., BOSTON."

[*Samuel Adam's Reply.*]

"SIR—I have lately been favoured with three letters from you, and must beg you to attribute my omitting to make due acknowledgments till this time, to a multiplicity of affairs to which I am obliged to give my constant attention. The unrighteous and oppressive act of the British Parliament for shutting up this harbour, though executed with a rigour beyond the intent, even of its framers, has hitherto failed, and will, I believe, continue to fail of the effect, which the enemies of America flattered themselves it would have. The inhabitants still wear cheerful countenances; far from being in the least intimidated, they are resolved to undergo the greatest hardships rather than submit in any instance to the tyrannical act. They are daily encouraged to persevere, by the intelligence they receive from their brethren, not of this province only, but every other

* They did meet on the first of August, to show that they met according to their *own* appointment, and not in obedience to the *king's* writs.

colony, that they are considered as suffering in the common cause, and the resolution of all to support them in the conflict. Lord North had no expectation that we should be thus sustained; on the contrary, he trusted that Boston would be left to fall alone. He has therefore made no preparation for the effects of an union. From the information I have had from intelligent persons in England, I verily believe the design was to seize some persons and send them home; but the steadiness and prudence of the people, and the unexpected union of the colonies, evidenced by liberal contributions for our support, has disconcerted them and they are at a loss to know how to proceed further. Four regiments are encamped on our common and more are expected; but I hope the people will by circumspect behaviour, prevent their taking occasion to act. The port bill is followed by two other acts, one for regulating the government of this province, or rather totally to destroy our free constitution, and substituting an absolute despotic one in its stead; the other for the more *impartial* administration of justice, or as some term it for screening from punishment any soldier who shall murder an American, for asserting his rights. A submission to these acts will doubtles be required and expected; but whether General Gage will find it an easy thing to *force* the people to submit to so great and fundamental a change of government, is a question I think worth his consideration. Will the people of America consider these measures as an attack on the constitution of an individual province, in which the rest are not interested, or will they view the model of government prepared for us as a system for the whole continent? Will they as unconcerned spectators, look on it to be designed only to lop off the exuberant branches of democracy in the constitution of this province, or as part of a plan to reduce them all to slavery. These are questions, in my opinion, of great importance, which I trust will be thoroughly weighed in a general congress. May God

inspire that intended body with wisdom and fortitude, and unite and prosper their councils.

The people of this province are thoroughly sensible of the necessity of breaking off all commercial connection with a country, whose political councils tend only to enslave them. They, however, consider the body of the nation as kept in profound ignorance of the nature of the dispute between Britain and the colonies, and are taught to believe that we are a perfidious and rebellious people. It is with reluctance they come into any resolutions, which must distress those who are not the objects of their resentments, but they are urged to it by motives of self-preservation; and are therefore signing an agreement in the several towns, not to consume any British manufactures, which shall be imported after the last of August next, and that they may not be imposed upon, they are to require an oath of those of whom they purchase goods. It is the virtue of the yeomanry we are chiefly to depend upon. Our friends in Maryland talk of withholding the exportation of tobacco; this was hinted to us by the gentlemen of the late House of Burgesses of Virginia, who had been called together, after the dissolution of the Assembly. This would be a measure greatly interesting to the mother country.

Should America hold up her own importance to the body of the nation, and at the same time agree to one general bill of rights, the dispute might be settled on principles of freedom, and harmony be restored between Great Britain and the colonies.

I am, with great regard,
your friend and servant,
SAMUEL ADAMS.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, Virginia."

Soon after Mr. Lee's return from Williamsburg, he procured a very full meeting of the inhabitants of Westmoreland. And after haranguing them on the state of affairs, and inveighing in bold and indignant terms

against the English ministry, dwelling in pathetic description on the sufferings of their countrymen in Boston, he proposed several resolutions. These expressed a warm sympathy for the people of that town, cheered them by assurances of support, and exhorted them to persevere in their manly resistance. The author has in his possession, a manuscript outline of Mr. Lee's harangue on this occasion, and a copy of the resolutions. A corresponding committee for his native county was now formed, and of it, he was a diligent member.

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Lee used the utmost diligence as a member of the state committee of correspondence, to collect the sense of the different colonies, on the subject of a general Congress. He had proposed to the members of the House of Burgesses, after their dissolution, at once to recommend such a measure; but the majority preferred a course of more delay. He was apprehensive, unless he could assure the Assembly, (which was to meet the first of August,) that the other colonies approved the immediate adoption of the plan, that a recommendation of the measure by Virginia, would be again postponed. He was evidently prepared for the exigency of affairs; seeing clearly that a struggle would, very soon become, not only a duty, but a matter of necessity, he wished to prepare for it, the strength and the wisdom of all the colonies; and seems early to have entertained the idea, that no measure could be devised, so well calculated to ensure an effectual union, as a federal Congress. Such a body alone, he believed, could awaken the moral energies of the people, and apply and direct their physical powers. Hence he urged its adoption, with all the zeal of devotion to his country, and with all the force of his powerful and persuasive eloquence.

The first General Assembly of Virginia met at Williamsburg, on the first of August, 1774. In it were present all the conspicuous men of the state, among whom Mr. Lee ardently exerted himself to induce the adoption of every measure calculated to render his country able to meet even the worst event: distinguishing himself as a powerful, an eloquent, and an intrepid assertor of the rights of his countrymen. He strenu-

ously urged the propriety of making common cause with the people of Boston; of breaking off all commercial intercourse with the mother country, and of recommending an immediate meeting of a general congress. This last measure was carried in the Assembly, and the following deputies were chosen: Messrs. Peyton Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, and Edmund Pendleton. The letter of instructions furnished to the deputies, displays, in a strong and cheering light, the talents and firmness of the patriots of Virginia.

The purpose of this appointment, and the tenor of the letter of instructions accompanying it, were entirely congenial to the spirit and views of Mr. Lee. Whatever hopes he may have entertained of a restoration of harmony between the mother country and the colonies, from the measures which might be adopted in a general congress, he considered such an assembly as the surest mean of organizing efficient plans of resistance. It opened to him a new and enlarged sphere of exertion. His generous and comprehensive patriotism had long since embraced the mutual interests, deplored the general oppression, and gloried in the assertion of the common cause of America. The prospects of the labours and trials of a public life earnestly devoted to the business of an extensive country, in a gloomy period, did not repress the ardor, or check the activity, of his mind. No one ever obeyed with more alacrity the call of his country. No patriot ever acted more entirely on the principle, that every man owed his most cheerful and unwearied efforts to his country, especially in times of trouble and danger. None of the great men of that day carried into the public service a firmer fortitude, a more exalted patriotism, and a more enduring patience.

It will, perhaps, be not unacceptable to the reader, to be presented with a letter written about this time, by Colonel Washington to Mr. Lee. This letter is interesting, as it was written by him who was to become the great military leader of the revolution. This shows the

sound sense which he exhibited, as well in council as in the field. It is the first letter of a correspondence, of the most affectionate and confidential character, between General Washington and Mr. Lee, beginning in the year '74, and continuing until the death of the latter. This correspondence was on subjects of the deepest interest and importance to the country. The letters of General Washington were as frequent as his all-important labours would allow; written from the camp and the field of battle; on the day of disaster and of victory; from his fireside, and from the banks of the rivers, whose courses he traces, and whose possible communications he considers.*

"WILLIAMSBURG, AUGUST 9, 1774.

DEAR SIR—If this letter should, (though I do not see any probable chance that it will,) reach your hands in time, it is to ask, if you do not think it necessary, that the deputies from this colony, should be furnished with authentic lists of the exports and imports annually, more especially to and from Great Britain; and, in that case, to beg of you to obtain such from the custom-house officers on the Potomac and Rappahannock. I have de-

*In a late work, "Sketches of the Life of N. Green, by William Johnson, of South Carolina," the author has, without due inquiry, stated more than once, that Richard H. Lee, and other eminent men of the revolution, were inimical to General Washington, particularly about the period of the trial of General Charles Lee. The same remark is made, in regard to the brothers of Mr. Lee, Francis L. Lee, and Arthur Lee, Esqrs. In addition to the full evidence of the entire want of foundation of these hasty *assertions*, which the reader will find in this Memoir, and the correspondence of General Washington, it may here be remarked, that General Green, whose unshaken attachment to Washington is justly made one of his merits by the author, was a warm friend and constant correspondent of Richard H. Lee, during the very time when the latter is said to have been inimical to General Washington. It was the effort of *tories* to create a distrust between General Washington and R. H. Lee. It had not the intended effect. The illustrious statesman who *moved* the declaration of independence, and the immortal chief who established its principles by his victories, admired and loved each other.

sired the speaker, if he should think it expedient, and might not have thought of it, to do the same from the York, and James Rivers offices.

I have got an account (though not a certified one,) from Mr. Wythe, of our number of taxables in 1770, since increased (Archy Carey says) to 10,000, as would have appeared by the list which would have been returned in May, if the session had gone on.

I am, with esteem, dear sir,

your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.*

P. S. If you should travel to Philadelphia by land, I should be glad of your company. Mr. Henry, is to be at my house on his way, Tuesday the thirtieth instant."

Mr. Lee was unavoidably detained in Virginia, and did not reach Philadelphia as soon as his colleagues. He made every effort, however, to appear promptly at the meeting of the Congress, and was able to take his seat, before the House had commenced its deliberations.

Here he became personally acquainted with the distinguished men of the several colonies, with whom he had for some time corresponded. To most of the members, his character was already known, for his fame had extended beyond the limits of his native state. It may easily be imagined, how cordial was the meeting between those patriots, who had interchanged the most friendly sentiments; who had felt the sympathies of congenial minds; who had long entertained the same political views; who had devoted their services to the welfare of their common country; and were willing to sacrifice their lives and fortunes, for its freedom and happiness.

A more able and a more virtuous body, than the first continental Congress, never assembled. A more mo-

* See the very interesting correspondence with Washington in vol. ii.

mentous business, never demanded the attention of men, than that, which was about to employ their minds. The liberty of themselves and their posterity, depended upon the wisdom and vigour of their councils. "To this venerable body," it has been well said, "every American heart will bow with homage, while the name of liberty shall be dear in our land."*

After several days had been spent, in the examination of the credentials of the members, and in other preliminary arrangements, the House was at length completely and solemnly organized. The day on which the House was to commence its deliberations arrived. It met, and "a long and deep silence is said to have followed its organization."† Patrick Henry was the first speaker on this occasion. "He was followed" says his biographer, "by Mr. Richard Henry Lee, who charmed the House with a different kind of eloquence. Chaste, classical, beautiful, his polished periods rolled along without effort, filling the ear with the most bewitching harmony, and delighting the mind with the most exquisite imagery."

Great expectations had been formed of Mr. Lee, by the House generally, and particularly by those of the members with whom he had previously corresponded. Seldom have expectations been so completely answered. It was not the lustre of abilities, nor the splendour and richness of his eloquence, nor the fire and the grace of his oratory, which so forcibly struck the House. It was the comprehensive view of the subject he took; the variety of political knowledge he exhibited; the maturity of wisdom; the dignity of sentiment; the boldness and elevation of spirit he displayed, which so raised the hopes, so cheered and animated the friends of American freedom. He vividly and indignantly described and enumerated the wrongs of America; and learnedly and accurately stated her constitutional rights. He discovered a perfect knowledge of the resources and interests of the mother country; of the views and policy of

* Life of Patrick Henry. p. 105. † Ibid. p. 106.

her ministers; of the resources of the colonies; and of the interests and motives likely to govern and actuate the powerful rivals of Great Britain.

This first occasion on which Mr. Lee spoke in Congress, afforded a happy subject for the display of his eloquence, and political knowledge, his zeal for liberty, and his devotion to his country. He was deeply interested in the solemn questions about to be agitated, and he was endeavouring, effectually, to aid in securing the freedom of his country.

The Congress met on the 4th of September, 1774. On the sixth instant, it was resolved, "that a committee be appointed, to state the rights of the colonies in general, the several instances in which those rights are violated or infringed, and the means most proper to be pursued, to obtain a restoration of them."* It was determined that this committee should consist of two members from each colony. As the assembling of a Congress, and the adoption of every measure was to be justified, on the ground of the violation of the rights of all the colonies, it was highly wise, that the views and grievances of all should be fully stated. The House would thus become certainly and minutely acquainted with the feelings of the people, harmony and concert would prevail, and necessary measures would be unanimously adopted.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Pendleton, were selected from the Virginia deputation.†

* See Journals, vol. i. p. 10, 11.

† Ibid, p. 11.—In pages 107, 8, of the Life of Patrick Henry, the author has led his readers to infer, that R. H. Lee, and P. Henry, though great and eloquent declaimers, were not only unskilled in composition, but unpractised in the "dry details of business." Of P. Henry, his biographer had a right to speak. Of the success of Mr. Lee in compositon, it is believed, sufficient evidence has already been given in this Memoir. The reader will find more ample proof of the abilities, and other qualifications of Mr. Lee as a writer. Of no man of genius, not even of the younger Pitt, can it be said with less truth, than of R. H. Lee, that he was not great

On the seventeenth of September, a spirited preamble and resolutions of the several towns and districts of Suffolk, in Massachusetts, and an address to Governor Gage, were laid before Congress.* The sentiments expressed in them, were in unison with those of the whole Congress, but more particularly acceptable to Mr. Lee. Accordingly, he moved, and it was unanimously

Resolved, "That this Assembly deeply feel the sufferings of their fellow citizens in Massachusetts Bay, under the operation of the late unjust, cruel, and oppressive acts of the British Parliament; that they most thoroughly approve of the wisdom and fortitude, with which opposition to these wicked ministerial measures hath hitherto been conducted; and it earnestly recommends to their brethren, a perseverance in the same firm and temperate conduct, as expressed in the resolutions determined upon, at a late meeting of the delegates for the county of Suffolk, on Tuesday, the sixth instant, trusting that the effects of the united efforts of North America, in their behalf, will carry such conviction to the British nation, of the unwise, unjust, and ruinous policy of the present administration, as quickly to introduce better men, and wiser measures.

Resolved, "That contributions from all the colonies, for supplying the necessities, and alleviating the distresses

in the "dry details of business." The journals of the old Congress, the universal attestation of his cotemporaries, and manuscripts now in the possession of the author, abundantly establish the fact, that his habits of patient investigation, unwearied attention to the driest details of business, and his aptitude to the performance of them, his knowledge of men and things, the order and method of his transactions, were as remarkable as the brilliancy and sprightliness of his fancy, and the extent of his knowledge. He was either chairman, or a member of every military and naval, as well as of every miscellaneous business committee, during his long deputation to the continental Congress. Letters to Mr. Lee, from General Washington, and almost every general officer, down to deputy quartermasters—from Drs. Rush, Shippen, &c., of the medical department, consulting him on the most minute details of their duties, will be found among the correspondence, vol. ii.

* See Journals, vol. i. p. 13.

of our brethren at Boston, ought to be continued in such manner, and so long as their occasions may require."*

On the 27th, Congress had under consideration, "the means most proper to be used, for the restoration of American rights."† The reader will recollect, how earnestly Mr. Lee had advised, both in and out of the legislature of Virginia, the plan of non-importation of all articles of British manufactures. He had also proposed the plan of stopping all exports to Great Britain, from the colonies. He advised these plans, as of the most probable efficacy, not, indeed, in changing the purposes of the ministry, but in bringing the interests of the nation into opposition to their policy and measures. He now, with equal earnestness and ability, urged Congress to the adoption of a general system of non-intercourse, and resolutions expressing the expediency of such a system, were adopted. A committee was appointed to report a plan, for carrying into effect these resolutions. Mr. Lee was one of this committee; and the plan reported, was very similar to that which he had advised in his own state, and which had there been extensively adopted. The importance of the trade of the mother country with the colonies, was obvious to any one, at all acquainted with the extent of it. To Mr. Lee, who was accurately informed on the subject of the commercial and financial relations of the two countries, a non-intercourse, appeared a measure which could not fail to have a powerful operation, and a decisive effect. He wisely foresaw, that if it failed to array the interests of the nation, against its willingness to be flattered by ministerial theories of Parliamentary omnipotence, war must follow. With how much wisdom he had long urged an entire cessation of trade, may be seen, by referring to Mr. Burke's speech on "American Taxation," for its importance to the mother country. "The trade with America

* Taken from the original manuscipts of Mr. Lee. See Journ. p. 19.

† Ibid, p. 21.

alone, is now (March 22, 1775) less than 500,000*l.*, of being equal to what this great commercial country, England, carried on at the beginning of this century, with all the world."

On the 1st October, the Congress having resumed the consideration of the means necessary to the restoration of American Rights, resolved unanimously, "that a loyal address to his majesty be prepared, dutifully requesting the royal attention to the grievances which alarm and distress his majesty's faithful subjects in North America; and entreating his majesty's gracious interposition to remove such grievances; thereby to restore to Great Britain and the colonies, that harmony so necessary to the happiness of the British empire, and so ardently desired by all America." It was ordered that Mr. Lee, Mr. J. Adams, Mr. Johnson,* Mr. Henry, and Mr. Rutlege be a committee to prepare such an address to his majesty.†

It has often been remarked of Mr. Lee, that boldness and energy were striking traits in both his private and public character; whilst he, no doubt, trembled at the prospect of the *distresses* which war would bring upon his family and country, he was not "afraid steadily to look in the face of that glaring and dazzling splendour,"

* The author cannot pass the name of this gentleman, without a tribute to his memory, which every virtuous American must delight to bestow. He was one of the ablest men in the old Congress. There did not live in, those times which "tried men's souls," a purer patriot, or a more efficient citizen. He was governor of Maryland during the darkest period of the Revolution. Under his administration, Maryland was distinguished for her devotion to the common cause. On one occasion, when General Washington was retreating through the Jersies, he raised a large body of Maryland militia, and marched at their head to his camp, by whom he was received with the most marked respect. He was, under the federal government, a judge of the United States' court. He was frequently in flattering terms invited by General Washington to accept of the appointment of secretary of state. No Roman citizen ever loved his country more. His private virtues entitled him to veneration and love. Thomas Johnson was, indeed, an honour to the cause of liberty.

† Journal, p. 22.

of English power, "at which the eyes of eagles had blenched." On the third of October, he moved the following strong and spirited resolution: *Resolved* "That as we find the reason declared in the preamble to the acts of Parliament, for raising a revenue in America, to be for supporting the civil government, the administration of justice, and for protecting, defending and securing the colonies," the Congress recommend it to those colonies, in which it has not been already done, to provide constitutional, competent, and honourable support for the purposes of government, and administration of justice; and that as it is quite unreasonable, that the mother country should be at the expense of maintaining standing armies in North America, for its defence; and that administration may be convinced, that this is unnecessary and improper, as North America is able, willing, and under Providence, determined to defend, protect, and secure itself, the Congress do most earnestly recommend to the several colonies, that a militia be forthwith appointed and well disciplined, and that it be well provided with ammunition and proper arms."* That Mr. Lee was not outrunning the exercise of a sound policy, and was not hastening unnecessarily a state of war, will be obvious to the statesman; for at this moment, Boston was occupied by a regular army, and military works were carried on daily around it; and the course of events proved that the ministry never were convinced, from their conciliatory measures, and from the dutiful addresses of Congress, that North America would dare to arm and defend itself. To a majority of the members, the resolution appeared too strong. They were apprehensive, lest it might be understood as speaking the language, and breathing the spirit of menace and rebellion. It was modified to suit the cautious temper of the House, and adopted in the following language: *Resolved unanimously*, That it be an instruction to the committee appointed to draw up

* From the original manuscript of Mr. Lee.

an address to the king. Whereas Parliamentary taxes on America have been laid, on pretence of "defraying the expenses of government, and supporting the administration of justice, defending, protecting, and securing the colonies," that they do assure his majesty the colonies have, or will make ample provision for defraying all the necessary expenses of supporting government, and the due administration of justice in the respective colonies; that the militia if put on a proper footing would be amply sufficient for their defence in time of peace; that they are desirous of putting it on such a footing, immediately, and that in case of war, the colonies are ready to grant supplies for raising any further forces that may be necessary.*

How tamed and subdued is the language of the resolution finally adopted, compared with that first moved. An endorsement on the original manuscript of Mr. Lee, shows plainly, that he was a good deal displeased, at the rejection of his resolution in the language in which it was offered. It is in these words: "A motion made in Congress by R. H. Lee, to apprise the public of danger, and of the necessity of putting the colonies, in a state of defence. A majority had not the spirit to adopt it." The same caution which caused the rejection of Mr. Lee's motion, induced all the older members of the Virginia Assembly, to oppose a motion to arm the militia of that colony, made by P. Henry, in a subsequent year.

On the sixth of October, the Congress resumed the consideration of the means proper to be used for the restoration of their rights. While it was deliberating, an express arrived from Boston, with a letter addressed by the committee of correspondence of that town. The committee informed Congress of the military proceedings of General Gage, and particularly complained of the erection of fortifications around the town, which, with the ships in the harbour, will command every ave-

* Ib. page 22.

nue into the town. It is stated in the letter, "that after the town is enclosed, it is apprehended that the citizens will be held as hostages for the submission of the people of the county; they apply, therefore, to Congress for advice how to act; that if Congress advise to quit the town, *they obey;* that if it is judged, that by maintaining their ground, they can better serve the public cause, they will not shrink from hardship and danger, &c."* Every one must admire the firm and generous devotion to their country, which inspired the committee, and the inhabitants of Boston. To Mr. Lee, no sacrifice could seem too great to be made; no hardship too severe to be endured, when submission to tyranny, would be the consequence of shrinking from suffering. Judging of the citizens of Boston, from his own feelings, and indeed, from their own conduct and declarations, he did not hesitate to advise them to quit the town, as a longer subjection to military control, would be as inconsistent with the feelings of freemen, as the continuance in the town might be dangerous to themselves, and injurious to the public cause. He therefore moved, that it be resolved, "that the Congress are of opinion, that it is inconsistent with the honour and safety of a free people to live within the control, and exposed to the injuries of a military force, not under the government of the civil power. And as General Gage has thought proper to take possession of the town of Boston with an armed force, and is converting that once free city, into a military garrison, the Congress advise from every motive of honour, safety and wisdom, that the free citizens of Boston, no longer expose themselves to the dangerous consequences of the military manœuvring carrying on against the town, but quit the place, and find an asylum among their hospitable countrymen, who will no doubt, on this trying occasion, display that virtuous humanity, which may be so deservedly exercised towards their brethren and oppressed fellow citizens; and it is earnestly recommended

* See Journal, p. 23.

to all British America, from time to time to supply these, their distressed and deserving countrymen."* This resolution was rejected; and the expediency of leaving the town, was left to the consideration of the provincial Assembly. It was also resolved, "that in the event of such a measure, it would be recommended to the colonies, to contribute towards recompensing them for any injury they may thereby sustain." This resolution was *unanimously* adopted. The second resolution, which recommended to the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay, "to *submit* to the suspension of the administration of justice, where it cannot be had in a legal and peaceable manner, according to their present charter, and the laws grounded thereon," was carried by a *majority*. Mr. Lee voted, however, in the *minority*.† It is not intended by this remark, to contrast the votes of the two parties. The majority consisted of firm and fearless men; but, they thought that conciliatory measures would most probably alter the present policy of the mother country. Mr. Lee, on the contrary, thought that bold and energetic measures alone, would induce ministers to redress our grievances; for he always declared it was obvious, that they thought that America would never resist by force, any edict of England. He believed, that if by measures just short of war, a contrary conviction could be produced in the minds of the ministry, or a majority of the English people, war might be avoided: or, if still they blindly and proudly persevered in contemning the spirit of their colonies, and trampling on their rights, the country would be prepared for a resort to arms. It is said, however, that Mr. Lee had been long convinced, that this resort would be necessary, and that it would terminate, though leading through danger and suffering, in the independence of his country.

On the 11th October, it was resolved unanimously, that a memorial be prepared to the people of British

* Taken from the original manuscript of Mr. Lee.

† Journal, p. 25.

America, stating to them the necessity of a firm, united, and invariable observance of the measures recommended by Congress, as they tender the invaluable rights and liberties derived to them from the laws and constitutions of their country. Also, that an address be prepared to the people of Great Britain." Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay, were appointed to prepare the memorial and address.*

In an account given by the author of the "Life of Patrick Henry," of the part performed by the gentlemen who composed the two leading committees of this session of Congress, viz. that appointed to prepare the memorial and address, and that to prepare an address to the king, which was appointed on the first instant, it is stated, that Mr. Lee was charged with the address to the people of England; that a draught was reported by him, which occasioned great disappointment, and was recommitted, and entirely superseded by one prepared by Mr. Jay. It is there also stated, that the petition to the king, which was finally adopted, was written by Mr. Dickinson.

It may, however, be safely asserted, that this account of the production of these celebrated state papers, is, in some respects, essentially erroneous. From a communication which the author received from Mr. Jay,† in reply to inquiries addressed to him on this subject, the reader will be satisfied, that the account here given, rests on the most direct and authentic information.‡ Mr. Jay was one of the committee ordered to prepare the memorial and address, and must be supposed to be well informed of the proceedings of the committee to which he belonged, and of the body in which he acted. With the poet he can say,

"—— Quæque ipse vidi—
Et quorum pars magna fui."——

* Journ. p. 27.

† This great and good man still lives, in the enjoyment of that liberty for which he laboured, and of the veneration of every virtuous citizen.

‡ See Mr. Jay's letter, Appendix, No. 3.

From the communication just referred to, it seems improbable that the petition to the king was written by Mr. Dickinson. The general impression has been, from its first appearance to the present times, that it was written by Mr. Lee. The author of the "Life of Washington," in his account of the proceedings of the Congress of '74, says, that the composition of the address to the people of England had been generally attributed to Mr. Jay, and that of the petition to the king to Mr. Lee. This general impression as to the real author of the address, is now well known to be correct. There is reason to believe, that it is equally correct, with regard to the writer of the petition. Mr. Lee was *chairman* of the committee to prepare the memorial and address, and also of that to draw up the petition to the king. The intrinsic evidence that he was the writer of the petition, will appear very strong to the intelligent reader, who will compare the composition of it with that of the memorial to the people of British America.

It was agreed, in the committee, to draw the memorial and the address; that Mr. Lee should prepare a draught of the memorial, which was the first both in order and importance; and that Mr. Jay should prepare a draught of the address, both of which were done accordingly.* Thus it is certain, that Mr. Lee did not undertake to write the address to the people of Great Britain. In making the report of the committee, he may have read it, as the chairman; the honour of composing it belongs to Mr. Jay. It is equally certain, that Mr. Lee wrote the memorial to the people of British America. The fact that these draughts, upon their being first reported, were recommitted, does not justify the inference of imperfection in the composition of the originals. It would seem probable, that no writer could anticipate every idea which might be suggested in a large and able body, or that he could foresee the exact relative importance, in its estimation, of every right, and the violation of it. The

* See id. in App. No. 3.

recommitments were made, with instructions to *add* some other matter which appeared to the Congress important.

In the remarks tending to prove that Mr. Lee was the writer of the petition to the king, it must not be supposed, for a moment, that the least intention, or wish, has been entertained to diminish the fame of Mr. Dickinson, to whom this document has been sometimes attributed. We would give to each, his own; the fame of Mr. Lee, does not require the slightest diminution of the just claims of honour, of any of his great and patriotic cotemporaries. And the address of the Congress to the people of Quebec, is honourable evidence of the ability of Mr. Dickinson.

The great celebrity of the addresses, &c., of the Congress of '74-5, will justify the author of this Memoir, in the efforts he has made to ascertain the true share of honour to which Mr. Lee is entitled. These public papers cannot be too often read by the countrymen and descendants of their authors. They inspired the people of the colonies with unbounded confidence in the wisdom and ability of their delegates, and attracted the admiration, respect, and sympathy of Europe, towards themelves and the cause of America. The reader will, no doubt, recollect the eulogy of Lord Chatham. Speaking in the House of Lords, of these papers, which had reached England, he said, "when your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America,* when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation, and it has been my favourite study, I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master states of the world—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such complication of circumstances, no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia."

* The memorial, address, and petition, were transmitted to the colony agents, to be presented and printed.

The biographer of Mr. Lee, would be unfaithful to his memory, were he not to record in the history of his political life, *that* one of these admirable productions, of which he was certainly the author.

"*To the inhabitants of the colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.*

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

We, the delegates appointed by the good people of these colonies to meet at Philadelphia, in September last, for the purposes mentioned by our respective constituents, have, in pursuance of the trust reposed in us, assembled, and taken into our most serious consideration, the important matters recommended to the Congress. Our resolutions thereupon, will be herewith communicated to you. But as the situation of public affairs grows daily more and more alarming; and as it may be more satisfactory to you to be informed by us in a collective body, than in any other manner, of those sentiments that have been approved, upon a full and free discussion, by the representatives of so great a part of America, we esteem ourselves obliged to add this address to these resolutions.

In every case of opposition by a people to their rulers, or of one state to another, duty to Almighty God, the Creator of all, requires that a true and impartial judgment be formed of the measures leading to such opposition; and of the causes by which it has been provoked, or can in any degree be justified, that neither affection on the one hand, nor resentment on the other, being permitted to give a wrong bias to reason, it may be enabled to take a dispassionate view of all circumstances, and to settle the public conduct on the solid foundations of wisdom and justice.

From councils thus tempered arise the surest hopes of the divine favour, the firmest encouragement to the parties engaged, and the strongest recommendation of their cause to the rest of mankind.

With minds deeply impressed by a sense of these truths, we have diligently, deliberately, and calmly inquired into, and considered those exertions, both of the legislative and executive power of Great Britain, which have excited so much uneasiness in America, and have, with equal fidelity and attention, considered the conduct of the colonies. Upon the whole, we find ourselves reduced to the disagreeable alternative of being silent and betraying the innocent, or of speaking out and censuring those we wish to revere In making our choice of these distressing difficulties, we prefer the course dictated by honesty, and a regard for the welfare of our country.

Soon after the conclusion of the late war, there commenced a memorable change in the treatment of these colonies. By a statute made in the fourth year of the present reign, a time of profound peace, alleging, "the expediency of new provisions and regulations for extending the commerce between Great Britain and his majesty's dominions in America, and the necessity of raising a revenue in the said dominions for defraying the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the same," the Commons of Great Britain undertook to give and grant to his majesty many rates and duties, to be paid in these colonies. To enforce the observance of this act, it prescribes a great number of severe penalties and forfeitures; and in two sections makes a remarkable distinction between the subjects in Great Britain, and those in America. By the one, the penalties and forfeitures incurred *there*, are to be recovered in any of the king's courts of record at Westminster, or in the court of exchequer in Scotland; and by the other, the penalties and forfeitures incurred *here*, are to be recovered in any court of record, or in any court of admiralty, or vice admiralty, at the election of the informer or prosecutor.

The inhabitants of these colonies, confiding in the justice of Great Britain, were scarcely allowed sufficient time to receive and consider this act, before another, well known by the name of the stamp act, and passed in the fifth year of this reign, engrossed their whole attention. By this statute the British Parliament exercised in the most explicit manner a power of taxing us, and extending the jurisdiction of courts of admiralty and vice admiralty in the colonies, to matters arising within the body of a county, and directed the numerous penalties and forfeitures thereby inflicted, to be recovered in the said courts.

In the same year a tax was imposed upon us, by an act establishing several new fees in the customs. In the next year the stamp act was repealed; not because it was founded in an erroneous principle, but, as the repealing act recites, because "the continuance thereof would be attended with many inconveniences, and might be productive of consequences greatly detrimental to the commercial interest of Great Britain."

In the same year, and by a subsequent act it was declared, "that his majesty in Parliament, of right, had power to bind the people of these colonies by statutes in all cases whatsover."

In the same year, another act was passed, for imposing rates and duties payable in these colonies. In this statute the commons, avoiding the terms of giving and granting "humbly besought his majesty that it might be enacted, &c." But from a declaration in the preamble, that the rates and duties were "in lieu of" several others granted by the statute first before mentioned for raising a revenue, and from some other expressions it appears, that these duties were intended for that purpose.

In the next year, [1767,] an act was made "to enable his majesty to put the customs and other duties in America under the management of commissioners, &c." and the king thereupon erected the present expensive board of commissioners, for the express purpose of carrying

into execution the several acts relating to the revenue and trade in America.

After the repeal of the stamp act, having again resigned ourselves to our ancient unsuspicious affections for the parent state, and anxious to avoid any controversy with her, in hopes of a favourable alteration in sentiments and measures towards us, we did not press our objections against the above mentioned statutes, made subsequent to that repeal.

Administration, attributing to trifling causes, a conduct that really proceeded from generous motives, were encouraged in the same year, (1767) to make a bolder experiment on the patience of America.

By a statute, commonly called the glass, paper, and tea act, made fifteen months after the repeal of the stamp act, the Commons of Great Britain resumed their former language, and again undertook to "give and grant rates and duties to be paid in these colonies," for the express purpose of "raising a revenue, to defray the charges of the administration of justice, the support of civil government, and defending the king's dominions," on this continent. The penalties and forfeitures, incurred under this statute, are to be recovered in the same manner, with those mentioned in the foregoing acts.

To this statute, so naturally tending to disturb the tranquillity then universal throughout the colonies, Parliament, in the same session, added another, no less extraordinary.

Ever since the making the present peace, a standing army has been kept in these colonies. From respect for the mother country, the innovation was not only tolerated, but the provincial legislatures generally made provision for supplying the troops.

The Assembly of the province of New York, having passed an act of this kind, but differing in some articles, from the directions of the act of Parliament made in the fifth year of this reign, the House of Representatives in that colony was prohibited by a statute made in the last session mentioned, from making any bill, order,

resolution, or vote, except for adjourning or choosing a speaker, until provision should be made by the said Assembly for furnishing the troops within that province, not only with all such necessaries as were required by the statute which they were charged with disobeying, but also with those required by two other subsequent statutes, which were declared to be in force, until the twenty-fourth day of March, 1769.

These statutes of the year 1767, revived the apprehensions and discontents, that had entirely subsided on the repeal of the stamp act; and amidst the just fears and jealousies thereby occasioned, a statute was made in the next year (1768) to establish courts of admiralty and vice-admiralty on a new model, expressly for the end of more effectually recovering the penalties and forfeitures inflicted by acts of Parliament, framed for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, &c.

The immediate tendency of these statutes, is to subvert the right of having a share in legislation, by rendering Assemblies useless; the right of property, by taking the money of the colonists without their consent; the right of trial by jury, by substituting in their place, trials in admiralty and vice-admiralty courts, where single judges preside, holding their commissions during pleasure; and unduly to influence the courts of common law, by rendering the judges thereof, totally dependent on the crown for their salaries.

These statutes, not to mention many others exceedingly exceptionable, compared one with another, will be found, not only to form a regular system, in which every part has great force, but also a pertinacious adherence to that system, for subjugating these colonies, that are not, and from local circumstances, cannot be represented in the House of Commons, to the uncontrolable and unlimited power of Parliament, in violation of their undoubted rights and liberties, in contempt of their humble and repeated supplications.

This conduct must appear equally astonishing and unjustifiable, when it is considered how unprovoked it has

been by any behaviour of these colonies. From their first settlement, their bitterest enemies never fixed on any of them a charge of disloyalty to their sovereign, or disaffection to their mother country. In the wars she has carried on, they have exerted themselves whenever required, in giving her assistance; and have rendered her services, which she has publicly acknowledged to be extremely important. Their fidelity, duty, and usefulness during the last war, were frequently and affectionately confessed by his late majesty and the present king.

The reproaches of those who are most unfriendly to the freedom of America, are principally levelled against the province of Massachusetts Bay; but with what little reason, will appear by the following declarations of a person, the truth of whose evidence in their favour, will not be questioned. Governor Bernard thus addresses the two Houses of Assembly in his speech on the 24th of April, 1762—"The unanimity and despatch, with which you have complied with the requisitions of his majesty, require my particular acknowledgment. And it gives me additional pleasure to observe, that you have therein acted under no other influence than a due sense of your duty, both as members of a general empire, and as the body of a particular province."

In another speech on the 27th of May, in the same year, he says,—"Whatever shall be the event of the war, it must be no small satisfaction to us, that this province hath contributed its full share to the support of it. Every thing that hath been required of it hath been complied with; and the execution of the powers committed to me, for raising the provincial troops hath been as full and complete as the grant of them. Never before were regiments so easily levied, so well composed, and so early in the field as they have been this year: the common people seem to be animated with the spirit of the general court, and to vie with them in their readiness to serve the king."

Such was the conduct of the people of the Massachu-

setts Bay during the last war. As to their behaviour before that period, it ought not to have been forgot in Great Britain, that not only on every occasion they had constantly and cheerfully complied with the frequent royal requisitions—but that chiefly by their vigorous efforts, Nova Scotia was subdued in 1710, and Louisbourg in 1745.

Foreign quarrels being ended, and the domestic disturbances that quickly succeeded on account of the stamp act, being quieted by its repeal, the Assembly of Massachusetts Bay transmitted an humble address of thanks to the king and divers noblemen, and soon after passed a bill for granting compensation to the sufferers in the disorder occasioned by that act.

These circumstances and the following extracts from Governor Bernard's letters in 1768, to the Earl of Shelburne, secretary of state, clearly show, with what grateful tenderness they strove to bury in oblivion the unhappy occasion of the late discords, and with what respectful deference they endeavoured to escape other subjects of future controversy. "The House, (says the governor,) from the time of opening the session to this day, has shown a disposition to avoid all dispute with me; every thing having passed with as much good humour as I could desire, except only their continuing to act in addressing the king, remonstrating to the secretary of state, and employing a separate agent. It is the importance of this innovation, without any wilfulness of my own, which induces me to make this remonstrance at a time when I have a fair prospect of having, in all other business, nothing but good to say of the proceedings of the House."*

"They have acted in all things, even in their remonstrance, with temper and moderation; they have avoided some subjects of dispute, and have laid a foundation for removing some causes of former altercation."†

"I shall make such a prudent and proper use of this

* January 21, 1768. † January 30, 1768.

letter, as I hope, will perfectly restore the peace and tranquillity of this province, for which purpose considerable steps have been made by the House of Representatives."*

The vindication of the province of Massachusetts Bay, contained in these letters, will have greater force, if it be considered, that they were written several months after the fresh alarm given to the colonies by the statutes passed in the preceding year.

In this place it seems proper to take notice of the insinuation of one of those statutes, that the interference of Parliament was necessary to provide for "defraying the charge of the administration of justice, the support of civil government, and defending the king's dominions in America."

As to the two first articles of expense, every colony had made such provision, as by their respective Assemblies, the best judges on such occasions, was thought expedient, and suitable to their several circumstances; respecting the last, it is well known to all men, the least acquainted with American affairs, that the colonies were established, and generally defended themselves, without the least assistance from Great Britain; and, that at the time of her taxing them by the statutes before mentioned, most of them were labouring under very heavy debts, contracted in the last war. So far were they from sparing their money, when their sovereign, constitutionally asked their aids, that during the course of that war, Parliament repeatedly made them compensations for the expenses of those strenuous efforts, which, consulting their zeal rather than their strength, they had cheerfully incurred.

Severe as the acts of Parliament before mentioned are, yet the conduct of administration hath been equally injurious and irritating, to this devoted country.

Under pretence of governing them, so many new institutions, uniformly rigid and dangerous, have been

* February 2, 1768.

introduced, as could only be expected from incensed masters, for collecting the tribute or rather the plunder of conquered provinces.

By an order of the king, the authority of the commander-in-chief, and under him, of the brigadier-generals, in time of peace, is rendered supreme in all the civil governments in America; and thus, an uncontrolable military power is vested in officers, not known to the constitution of these colonies.

A large body of troops, and a considerable armament of ships of war, have been sent to assist in taking their money without their consent.

Expensive and oppressive offices have been multiplied, and the acts of corruption industriously practised to divide and destroy.

The judges of the admiralty and vice-admiralty courts are impowered to receive their salaries and fees from the effects to be condemned by themselves.

The commissioners of the customs are empowered to break open houses without the authority of any civil magistrate, founded on legal information.

Judges of courts of common law, have been made entirely dependent on the crown for their commissions and salaries.

A court has been established at Rhode Island, for the purpose of taking colonists to England to be tried.

Humble and reasonable petitions from the representatives of the people, have been frequently treated with contempt; and Assemblies have been repeatedly and arbitrarily dissolved.

From some few instances, it will sufficiently appear, on what pretences of justice those dissolutions have been founded.

The tranquillity of the colonies having been again disturbed, as has been mentioned, by the statutes of the year 1767; the earl of Hillsborough, secretary of state, in a letter to Governor Bernard, dated April 22, 1768, censures the "presumption" of the House of Representatives, for "resolving on a measure of so inflamma-

tory a nature, as that of writing to the other colonies, on the subject of their intended representations against the late acts of Parliament," then declares that "his majesty considers this step as evidently tending to create unwarrantable combinations, to excite an unjustifiable opposition to the constitutional authority of Parliament:" and afterwards adds, "It is the king's pleasure, that as soon as the general court is again assembled, at the time prescribed by the charter, you should require the House of Representatives, in his majesty's name, to rescind the resolution which gave birth to the circular letter from the speaker, and to declare their disapprobation of, and dissent to that rash and hasty proceeding."

"If the new Assembly should refuse to comply with his majesty's reasonable expectation, it is the king's pleasure, that you should immediately dissolve them."

This letter being laid before the House, and the resolution not being rescinded according to order, the Assembly was dissolved. A letter of a similar nature was sent to other governors to procure resolutions approving the conduct of the representatives of Massachusetts Bay, to be rescinded also; and the Houses of Representatives in other colonies refusing to comply, Assemblies were dissolved.

These mandates spoke a language, to which the ears of English subjects had for several generations been strangers. The nature of Assemblies implies a power and right of deliberation; but these commands, proscribing the exercise of judgment on the propriety of the requisitions made, left to the Assemblies only the election between dictated submission, and threatened punishment: a punishment too, founded on no other act, than such as is deemed innocent even in slaves—of agreeing in petitions for redress of grievances, that equally affect all.

The hostile and unjustifiable invasion of the town of Boston, soon followed these events in the same year; though that town, the province in which it is situated, and all the colonies, from abhorrence of a contest with

their parent state, permitted the execution even of those statutes, against which they so unanimously were complaining, remonstrating, and supplicating.

Administration, determined to subdue a spirit of freedom, which English ministers should have rejoiced to cherish, entered into a monopolizing combination with the East India Company, to send to this continent vast quantities of tea, an article, on which a duty was laid by a statute, that in a particular manner, attacked the liberties of America, and which, therefore, the inhabitants of these colonies had resolved not to import. The cargo sent to South Carolina was stored, and not allowed to be sold. Those sent to Philadelphia and New York, were not permitted to be landed. That sent to Boston was destroyed, because governor Hutchinson, would not suffer it to be returned.

On the intelligence of these transactions arriving in Great Britain, the public spirited town last mentioned, was singled out for destruction, and it was determined the province it belongs to, should partake of its fate. In the last session of Parliament, therefore were passed the acts for shutting up the port of Boston, indemnifying the murderers of the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay, and changing their chartered constitution of government. To enforce these acts, that province is again invaded by a fleet and army.

To mention these outrageous proceedings, is sufficient to explain them. For though it is pretended, that the province of Massachusetts Bay, has been particularly disrespectful to Great Britain, yet in truth the behaviour of the people, in other colonies, has been an equal "opposition to the power assumed by parliament." No step however has been taken against any of the rest. This artful conduct conceals several designs. It is expected that the province of Massachusetts Bay will be irritated into some violent action, that may displease the rest of the continent, or that may induce the people of Great Britain to approve the meditated vengeance of an imprudent and exasperated ministry. If the unexampled

pacific temper of that province shall disappoint this part of the plan, it is hoped the other colonies will be so far intimidated as to desert their brethren, suffering in a common cause, and that thus disunited, all may be subdued.

To promote these designs, another measure has been pursued. In the session of Parliament last mentioned, an act was passed for changing the government of Quebec, by which act the Roman Catholic Religion, instead of being tolerated, as stipulated by the treaty of peace, is established; and the people there are deprived of a right to an Assembly, trials by jury, and the English laws in civil cases are abolished, and instead thereof, the French laws are established, in direct violation of his majesty's promise by his royal proclamation, under the faith of which many English subjects settled in that province, and the limits of that province are extended so as to comprehend those vast regions, that lie adjoining to the northerly and westerly boundaries of these colonies.

The authors of this arbitrary arrangement flatter themselves, that the inhabitants deprived of liberty, and artfully provoked against those of another religion, will be proper instruments for assisting in the oppression of such, as differ from them in modes of government and faith.

From the detail of facts herein before recited, as well as from authentic intelligence received, it is clear beyond a doubt, that a resolution is formed and now carrying into execution, to extinguish the freedom of these colonies, by subjecting them to a despotic government.

At this unhappy period, we have been authorized and directed to meet and consult together for the welfare of our common country. We accepted the important trust with diffidence, but have endeavoured to discharge it with integrity. Though the state of these colonies would certainly justify other measures than we have advised, yet weighty reasons determined us to prefer those which we have adopted. In the first place, it appeared to

us a conduct becoming the character, these colonies have ever sustained, to perform, even in the midst of the unnatural distresses and imminent dangers that surround them, every act of loyalty, and therefore, we were induced once more to offer to his majesty, the petitions of his faithful and oppressed subjects in America. Secondly, regarding with the tender affection, which we knew to be so universal among our countrymen, the people of the kingdom, from which we derive our origin, we could not forbear to regulate our steps by an expectation of receiving full conviction, that the colonists are equally dear to them. Between these provinces and that body subsists the social band, which we ardently wish may never be dissolved, and which cannot be dissolved, until their minds shall become indisputably hostile, or their inattention shall permit those who are thus hostile to persist in prosecuting with the powers of the realm, the destructive measures already operating against the colonists, and in either case, shall reduce the latter to such a situation, that they shall be compelled to renounce every regard, but that of self-preservation. Notwithstanding the violence with which affairs have been impelled, they have not yet reached that fatal point.—We do not incline to accelerate their motion, already alarmingly rapid; we have chosen a method of opposition, that does not preclude a hearty reconciliation with our fellow citizens, on the other side of the Atlantic. We deeply deplore the urgent necessity, that presses us to an immediate interruption of commerce, that may prove injurious to them. We trust they will acquit us of any unkind intentions towards them, by reflecting, that we are driven by the hands of violence, into unexperienced and unexpected public convulsions, and that we are contending for freedom, so often contended for by our ancestors.

The people of England will soon have an opportunity of declaring their sentiments concerning our cause. In their piety, generosity, and good sense, we repose high confidence; and cannot, upon a review of past events,

be persuaded, that they, the defenders of true religion, and the asserters of the rights of mankind, will take part against their affectionate protestant brethren in the colonies, in favour of our open, and their own secret enemies, whose intrigues, for several years past, have been wholly exercised in sapping the foundations of civil and religious liberty.

Another reason that engaged us to prefer the commercial mode of opposition, arose from an assurance, that the mode will prove efficacious, if it be persisted in with fidelity and virtue; and that your conduct will be influenced by these laudable principles, cannot be questioned. Your own salvation, and that of your posterity, now depends upon yourselves. You have already shown that you entertain a proper sense of the blessings you are striving to retain. Against the temporary inconveniences you may suffer from a stoppage of trade, you will weigh in the opposite balance, the endless miseries you and your descendants must endure, from an established arbitrary power. You will not forget the honour of your country, that must, from your behaviour, take its title in the estimation of the world, to glory, or to shame; and you will, with the deepest attention, reflect, that if the peaceable mode of opposition recommended by us, be broken and rendered ineffectual, as your cruel and haughty ministerial enemies, from a contemptuous opinion of your firmness, insolently predict will be the case, you must inevitably be reduced to choose, either a more dangerous contest, or a final, ruinous, and infamous submission.

Motives thus cogent, arising from the emergency of your unhappy coalition, must excite your utmost diligence and zeal, to give all possible strength and energy to the pacific measures calculated for your relief: but we think ourselves bound in duty to observe to you, that the schemes agitated against these colonies, have been so conducted, as to render it prudent, that you should extend your views to mournful events, and be in all respects prepared for every contingency. Above all

things, we earnestly entreat you, with devotion of spirit, penitence of heart, and amendment of life, to humble yourselves, and implore the favour of Almighty God: and we fervently beseech his Divine Goodness, to take you into his gracious protection."

On the 21st instant, it was *Resolved* "That an address be prepared to the people of Quebec, and letters to the colonies of St. John's, Nova Scotia, Georgia, East and West Florida, who have not sent deputies to represent them in this Congress."* It was ordered, "that Mr. Cushing, Mr. Lee, and Mr. Dickinson, be a committee to prepare the above address and letters."

On the twenty-fifth of October, it was resolved, "that the address to the king, (which had been reported and adopted,) be enclosed in a letter to the several colony agents, in order that the same may be, by them, presented to his majesty; and that the agents be requested to call in the aid of such noblemen and gentlemen as are esteemed firm friends to American liberty. Ordered that Mr. Lee, and Mr. Jay, prepare a letter to the agents."† Mr. Lee wrote the letter, which was reported the following day and adopted.‡

A short account has been given of the proceedings of that truly illustrious body; the delegates of the twelve colonies, assembled in general Congress, in Philadelphia, in 1774. It was due to the memory of Mr. Lee, to present to his countrymen, a sketch of the part he acted in that Assembly. His abilities, industry and patriotism, were no less beneficial to his country, than they were honourable to himself. He merited and obtained the thanks, not only of his native state, but of all the friends of America.

* See Journ. p. 56. † Ibid. p. 57.
‡ See Mr. Jay's letter, Ap. No. iii.

CHAPTER VI.

THE moderation and firmness of the Congress, and the ability of their addresses, made great impression upon the public mind in England. For a time, even the ministry paused! They were universally read and admired. They exhibited a knowledge of the constitution, and a strength of argument, which the best informed men believed could not have been found in the colonies. The effect of these on the English nation, and the opinion of Lord Chatham respecting them, are stated in the following letter, written by Mr. Arthur Lee, one of the Colony Agents, to his brother.

"LONDON, December 22d, 1774.

MY DEAR BROTHER—The proceedings of the Congress meet with universal approbation here, and have operated like an electrical shock, upon the ministry and their dependants. They begin to reprobate their own measures, and each to exonerate himself from the charge of having advised them. The King consented to receive the petition of the Congress, and Lord Dartmouth told us, it was found to be decent and respectful. I expect we shall receive his majesty's answer time enough to send with this.

The merchants have advertised for a meeting, and every thing seems to promise a speedy accommodation. The terms of that must depend on you. Your demands must be made with great moderation, and should not, nay, I think, cannot, be receded from one iota. Depend upon it, the same firmness and unanimity which have compelled a conciliatory disposition, will enforce a full redress. Be therefore firm, and fear not. The excess

of my anxiety for our ultimate success and the termination of these unhappy disturbances, makes me sometimes apprehensive, that these specious appearances will make you remiss in your preparations for a different conduct; that you will forget that he who sheathes the sword before the peace is concluded, exposes himself to a shameful defeat. But, trusting to your wisdom, I hope you will treat them as appearances only, which firmness, vigilance, and unanimity alone, on your part, can realize.

December 24th, Lord Dartmouth, this day informed us that his majesty received your petition very graciously, and for its importance, would lay it before his houses of Parliament, when they met.

I communicate to you the following copy of a letter from Lord Chatham, because I think it must give you infinite satisfaction. At the same time I must entreat you, not to let it get into the press, as it would be a breach of honour in me. "I have not words to express the infinite satisfaction which I feel since Congress has conducted this most arduous and delicate business, with such manly wisdom and calm resolution, as do the highest honour to their deliberations. Very few are the things contained in their resolves, that I could wish to be otherwise. Upon the whole, I think it must be evident to every unprejudiced man in England, who feels for the rights of mankind, that America, under all her oppressions and provocations, holds out to us the most fair and just opening for restoring harmony and affectionate intercourse as heretofore. I hope that the minds of men, are more than beginning to open on this great subject so little understood, and that it will be found impossible for freemen in England, to see three millions of Englishmen, slaves in America."

Such praise from the *character* of the age, ought to inspire you with confidence, if any thing can add to the conscious dignity of freemen, and make you resolve to maintain your demands with immovable firmness.

December 26th, I was yesterday in the country with Lord Chatham, to show him the petition of the Con-

gress. He approves of it exceedingly. His words were "the whole of your countrymen's conduct has manifested such wisdom, moderation and manliness of character, as would have done honour to Greece and Rome in their best days." *Laudari a laudato viro,* should make us cautious that we support the character, by a manly perseverance, in those measures which have secured it. His opinion is, that a solemn settlement of the question by a renunciation of the right to tax on one part, and an acknowledgment of supremacy on the other, might be made. My object is to unite the heads of opposition upon one uniform large ground, which, with the present popularity of our cause, will, I think, enforce a complete abolition of these pernicious measures.

I have this moment learnt that the resolution of the court, is, to repeal all the acts, except the declaratory and admiralty act; that Lords North and Dartmouth are to give place to Lords Gower and Hillsborough, who are to commence their administration with these conciliatory measures. The inconsistency of this plan is no objection to the probability of it, for these men have long been disciplined to turn, and turn, and turn again. But you may learn from it, that there is little cordiality in the relief to be given, and that we are to hold a jealous eye over the measures of men, whose minds are actuated against us by the bitterest rancour and revenge. You will consider this intelligence as of doubtful nature, and let no hasty gleam of hope go forth, which may tend to make men remiss in their exertions, or relax in the terms they demand.

Farewell—your affectionate brother,

ARTHUR LEE.

To Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

The delegates from the several counties of Virginia, met again in convention, on the twentieth March, 1775, in the town of Richmond. Mr. Lee was returned as a delegate from the county of Westmoreland. The first

proceeding of the convention was a resolution expressing the thanks of the colony to the continental Congress, for the wisdom of their measures. It was also resolved, "That the warmest thanks of this convention, and of all the inhabitants of this colony, are due to the worthy delegates, who were deputed by a former convention to represent this colony in the general Congress, for their cheerful undertaking, and faithful discharge, of the very important trust reposed in them."

Mr. Lee had, at this time, from his knowledge of the British ministry, and from a continued and profound contemplation of the times, relinquished all expectation that any satisfactory address would be granted. His private opinions were, that the time was approaching, and indeed had even now arrived, when any connexion with Great Britain, which *implied* political dependence, must cease; but prudence taught him to express them with caution. He perceived this, not more from the spirit of the ministry, and the tendency of their measures, than from the growth of the commerce and population of the colonies. He had ceased to think a connexion desirable, and seems to have anticipated the rapid and splendid progress of America, in power and in wisdom, when under the fostering influence of republican government. To him, a return, even to the "halcyon days" of colonial dependence, seemed more insupportable than a struggle through war, when there was a probability that it would terminate in the independence of his country.

To Mr. Lee, the passive temper and policy, beyond which too many seemed not yet to have carried their thoughts, appeared feeble and impolitic. Happily, Providence had raised up a cotemporary patriot of congenial spirit, and of genius equal to the exigency of the times, in Patrick Henry. Between these two men, as it has been already stated, there existed the warmest friendship, and unity of principle, and an exact coincidence of views. Like Valerius Poplicola of ancient Rome, each of them seemed fitted by Heaven, for a period at

which an oppressed people were to break the bands of despotic rule, and become free.

These gentlemen consulted with each other and determined to offer, in the convention, a resolution similar to that offered by Mr. Lee in Congress, in October '74. This was to arm the militia, and put the colony in a state of defence. Mr. Lee had moved in Congress, that the militia of the colonies should be armed. The reader has seen the modified shape in which that body adopted his resolution. It was agreed that Mr. Henry should move the resolution and that Mr. Lee should aid him in supporting it. They anticipated and encountered violent opposition from the older members of the house. They had to rouse their indignation at the wrongs already endured by their countrymen, particularly of Massachusetts Bay, to awaken fears of their contemplated enslavement by Great Britain, and, above all, to convince them, that in the event of a contest, a termination favourable to us was not improbable.

They were both eminently qualified for this task.—The bold and vehement eloquence of Henry, excited to the highest degree the passions of his hearers; the fervid, the beauteous and impressive declamation of Lee, presented liberty before their eyes, decorated in the most lovely and ravishiug charms; while his political wisdom and information showed them that the rich, the exalted boon was not unattainable. Men will act when the same process which affects their passions, enlightens and subdues their understandings. Hence, on this occasion the resolution was carried, though opposed by members whose judgments ought to have been matured by age, and whose influence was the effect and the reward of long public service. The author is indebted to the biographer of P. Henry, for the following interesting account of the part that Mr. Lee took in aid of the resolution, the adoption of which, had a very timely influence in emboldening the colonists to prepare for resistance. Chief Justice Marshall furnished the author of the "life of P. Henry, with a note in relation to the

debate on Mr. Henry's motion: "It is the substance, (says that author) of a statement made to the chief justice, (then an ardent youth, feeling an enthusiastic admiration of eloquence, and panting for war,) by his father, who was a member of the convention. Mr. Marshall (the father,) after describing Mr. Henry's speech, as being one of the most bold, vehement, and animated pieces of eloquence, that had ever been delivered; proceeded to state that he was followed by Mr. Richard Henry Lee, who took an interesting view of our real situation. He stated the force which Britain could probably bring against us, and reviewed our own resources and means of resistance. He stated the advantages and disadvantages of both parties, and drew from the statement, auspicious inferences; but he concluded by saying, "that admitting the probable calculations to be against us, we are assured in holy writ, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; and if the language of genius may be added to that of inspiration, I will say with our immortal bard.

> 'Thrice is he armed, who hath his quarrel just,
> And he but naked, tho' locked up in steel
> Whose conscience with injustice, is oppressed.'"

Mr. Henry and Mr. Lee were first named on the committee appointed to prepare a plan for arming the militia, and putting the colony in a state of defence.

Mr. Lee was again appointed by the convention, one of the deputies to the Congress, which was to meet at Philadelphia in May; and the convention having provided for the election of new members of its own body, he was returned from Westmoreland county.

The removal of all the arms and other military stores, from the magazine at Williamsburg, by order of Governor Dunmore, had occasioned great excitement, throughout the colony of Virginia. During this state of feeling, intelligence of the battles of Lexington and Concord arrived. These were occasioned by an attempt of General Gage to secure the military stores de-

posited at the latter place. A concerted design to disarm the colonies seemed evident, and the inhabitants were convinced that their subjugation was intended. The volunteer, or independent companies, in many parts of Virginia flew to arms. Those of the upper part of the Northern Neck of Virginia, actually commenced their march to Williamsburgh, and to the number of six or seven hundred men, arrived at Fredericksburgh on the same day with Mr. Lee, then on his journey to the continental Congress. A council of war was held, in which he was invited to preside.* But a letter having been received, stating that the governor had assured the citizens of Williamsburgh, that the powder, &c. should be restored, it was determined that the volunteers should return to their homes. Mr. Lee warmly approved of their activity and decision, and exhorted them, in animated terms, to continue to be ready to fight and fall in defence of their rights. They responded to his harangue, and gave each other a pledge to re-assemble, and "*by force of arms*, to defend the laws, the liberties, and rights of this, or any sister colony from unjust and wicked invasion."

The second continental Congress met in Philadelphia, on Wednesday, the 10th May, 1775. The aspect of affairs was more gloomy than when that venerable body had assembled in the precedent November. Among the first acts of this session, was the following resolution: "That as the present critical situation of these colonies renders it highly necessary, that ways and means should be devised for the speedy and secure conveyance of intelligence throughout this continent, a committee of six be appointed to consider the best means of establishing posts for this purpose." Mr. Lee was one of this committee.†

* See Life of Washington vol. 2. p. 194.

† See Jour. 109. The author mentions many committees on which Mr. Lee acted, to show that he was considered a man useful in "the dry details of business." His talents in this way have been undervalued; indeed, denied. See page 108 of this work.

On the second of June, a letter was laid before Congress, from the provincial convention of Massachusetts Bay, which stated the difficulties under which they laboured for want of a regular form of government, and requested Congress to favour them "with explicit advice, respecting the taking up and exercising the powers of civil government, &c." On the third instant, the foregoing letter was taken into consideration; and it was *Resolved*, "That a committee of five persons be chosen, to consider the same, and to report what in their opinion, is the best advice to give to that convention." One of the persons chosen, was Mr. Lee.*

On the same day four committees were chosen to draught papers. The committee whose business it was to draw up an address to the people of England, was composed of three members, viz. Messrs. Lee, R. R. Livingston, and Pendleton.† On the tenth instant, it was *Resolved*, "That it be recommended to the several conventions and committees of the colonies, to collect all the saltpetre, sulphur, and other munitions of war, and to encourage the manufacture of saltpetre and gunpowder." Five persons were chosen on the committee appointed, "to devise ways and means to introduce the manufacture of saltpetre, into these colonies;" one of whom was Mr. Lee.‡

On the fifteenth instant, it was *Resolved*, "That a general be appointed to command all the continental forces, to be raised for the defence of American liberty." George Washington was *unanimously* elected.§ On the sixteenth instant, a committee was appointed to draught a commission and instructions for the General. This committee consisted of Messrs. Lee, E. Rutledge, and J. Adams. On the following day the draughts of these papers were reported and adopted.‖ The original draught of the commission by which General Wash-

* Jour. p. 110. † Ib. p. 111. ‡ Ib. p. 116.

§ R. H. Lee therefore voted for him. In the life of Green, he is stated to have been unfriendly to General Washington.

‖ Jour. p. 121.

ington was constituted general and commander in chief of the American armies of the revolution, with an endorsement of his name on the back of it, was long in the possession of Mr. Lee's family. On the nineteenth instant, it was *Resolved,* "That Messrs. Lee, E. Rutledge, and J. Adams be a committee, to prepare a form of a commission, for the major and brigadier generals and other officers in the army."* On the twenty-first, General Washington addressed certain queries to Congress, which being read and debated, it was *Resolved,* That a committee of five be appointed to prepare proper answers." Of this committee Mr. Lee was one.† On the sixth of July, it was *Resolved,* "That a letter be prepared to the lord mayor, aldermen, and livery of London, expressing the thanks of this Congress, for their virtuous and spirited opposition to the oppressive and ruinous system of colony administration adopted by the British ministry." It was ordered that the committee appointed to prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, do prepare this."‡ On this day the address to the people of Great Britain was further considered and adopted.

It will be recollected, that *at this time blood had been shed.* The "immedicabile vulnus" (as Lord Chatham predicted it would be) had been inflicted! It had now become obvious, almost to every one, that war was inevitable, if freedom was worth the dangers through which alone it could be obtained and secured. There were few in America, and probably none in Congress, who made a question on this subject. One part of a great, and hitherto a prosperous empire, seemed now compelled to separate from the other! Even the *firmest* minds could scarcely bear the anticipations of the untried horrors of a civil war. Fellow-citizens, who a few years ago were united by similar interests; who boasted of the same freedom, and gloried in the same fame, were shortly to be arrayed in arms against each other. Fathers, sons,

* Jour. p. 122. † Ib. p. 124. ‡ Ib. p. 148.

and brothers, were to fall, perhaps, by each other's hands. The deep gloom, the awful anxieties of such a crisis, can be, in some degree, felt by the reader. The dignity of the reproaches of this last address to the people of Britain; its bold and exalted sentiments of reliance on heaven, and the sword drawn in self-defence; the eloquence of its expostulations; the deep pathos of its parting warnings, do justice to the occasion, and to those in whose name the draughtsman wrote! This address is, indeed, an imperishable monument to the genius and eloquence of Mr. Lee.*

"*The twelve united Colonies, by their Delegates in Congress, to the Inhabitants of Great Britain.*

FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN, AND BRETHREN!

By these, and by every other appellation that may designate the ties which bind us to each other, we entreat your serious attention to this our second attempt to prevent their dissolution. Remembrance of former friendships, pride in the glorious achievements of our common ancestors, and affection for the heirs of their virtues, have hitherto preserved our mutual connexion; but when that friendship is violated by the grossest injuries; when the pride of ancestry becomes our reproach, and we are no otherwise allied than as tyrants and slaves; when reduced to the melancholy alternative of renouncing your favour or our freedom; can we hesitate about the choice? Let the spirit of Britons determine.

* The family of Mr. Lee were long in possession of his original draught. The author learnt from a son of R. H. Lee, from whom he received the manuscripts of Mr. Lee, that this manuscript had been lost—that he had had it in his hands for many years—that it was in his father's hand-writing, with an endorsement, in the same writing, that it was the original manuscript draught drawn for the committee. This is the information the author has received. The son of Mr. Lee has written on the margin of the pages of the copy of the Journals from which he copies the address, "written by R. H. Lee—the original in the possession of F. L. Lee." It has been seen that Mr. Lee was the *chairman* of the committee.

In a former address we asserted our rights, and stated the injuries we had then received. We hoped that the mention of our wrongs would have roused that honest indignation which has slept too long for your honour, or the welfare of the empire. But we have not been permitted to entertain this pleasing expectation. Every day brought an accumulation of injuries, and the invention of the ministry has been constantly exercised in adding to the calamities of your American brethren.

After the most valuable right of legislation was infringed; when the powers assumed by your Parliament, in which we are not represented, and from our local and other circumstances cannot properly be represented, rendered our property precarious; after being denied that mode of trial to which we have long been indebted for the safety of our persons, and the preservation of our liberties; after being in many instances divested of those laws which were transmitted to us by our common ancestors, and subjected to an arbitrary code, compiled under the auspices of Roman tyrants; after those charters, which encouraged our predecessors to brave death and danger in every shape, on unknown seas, in deserts unexplored, amidst barbarous and inhospitable nations, were annulled; when, without the form of trial, without a public accusation, whole colonies were condemned, their trade destroyed, their inhabitants impoverished; when soldiers were encouraged to embrue their hands in the blood of Americans, by offers of impunity; when new modes of trial were instituted for the ruin of the accused, where the charge carried with it the horrors of conviction; when a despotic government was established in a neighbouring province, and its limits extended to every of our frontiers; we little imagined that any thing could be added to this black catalogue of unprovoked injuries: but we have unhappily been deceived, and the late measures of the British ministry fully convince us, that their object is the reduction of these colonies to slavery and ruin.

To confirm this assertion, let us recall your attention

to the affairs of America, since our last address. Let us combat the calumnies of our enemies; and let us warn you of the dangers that threaten you in our destruction. Many of your fellow subjects, whose situation deprived them of other support, drew their maintenance from the sea; but the deprivation of our liberty being insufficient to satisfy the resentment of our enemies, the horrors of famine were superadded, and a British Parliament, who, in better times, were the protectors of innocence, and the patrons of humanity, have, without distinction of age or sex, robbed thousands of the food which they were accustomed to draw from that inexhaustible source, placed in their neighbourhood by the benevolent Creator.

Another act of your legislature shuts our ports, and prohibits our trade with any but those states from whom the great law of self-preservation renders it absolutely necessary we should at present withhold our commerce. But this act (whatever may have been its design) we consider rather as injurious to your opulence than our interest. All our commerce terminates with you; and the wealth we procure from other nations, is soon exchanged for your superfluities. Our remittances must then cease with our trade; and our refinements with our affluence. We trust, however, that laws which deprive us of every blessing but a soil that teems with the necessaries of life, and that liberty which renders the enjoyment of them secure, will not relax our vigour in their defence.

We might here observe on the cruelty and inconsistency of those, who, while they publicly brand us with reproachful and unworthy epithets, endeavour to deprive us of the means of defence, by their interposition with foreign powers, and to deliver us to the lawless ravages of a merciless soldiery. But happily we are not without resoures; and though the timid and humiliating applications of a British ministry should prevail with foreign nations, yet industry, prompted by necessity, will not leave us without the necessary supplies.

We could wish to go no further, and, not to wound the ear of humanity, leave untold those rigorous acts of oppression, which are daily exercised in the town of Boston, did we not hope, that by disclaiming their deeds, and punishing the perpetrators, you would shortly vindicate the honour of the British name, and re-establish the violated laws of justice.

That once populous, flourishing, and commercial town, is now garrisoned by an army, sent not to protect, but to enslave its inhabitants. The civil government is overturned, and a military despotism erected upon its ruins. Without law, without right, powers are assumed unknown to the constitution. Private property is unjustly invaded. The inhabitants, daily subjected to the licentiousness of the soldiery, are forbid to remove, in defiance of their natural rights, in violation of the most solemn compacts. Or, if after long and wearisome solicitation, a pass is procured, their effects are detained, and even those who are most favoured, have no alternative but poverty or slavery. The distress of many thousand people, wantonly deprived of the necessaries of life, is a subject, on which we would not wish to enlarge.

Yet we cannot but observe, that a British fleet (unjustified even by acts of your legislature) are daily employed in ruining our commerce, seizing our ships, and depriving whole communities of their daily bread. Nor will a regard for your honour permit us to be silent, while British troops sully your glory, by actions, which the most inveterate enmity will not palliate among civilized nations, the wanton and unnecessary destruction of Charlestown, a large, ancient, and once populous town, just before deserted by its inhabitants, who had fled to avoid the fury of your soldiery.

If still you retain those sentiments of compassion by which Britons have ever been distinguished; if the humanity, which tempered the valour of our common ancestors, has not degenerated into cruelty, you will lament the miseries of their descendants.

To what are we to attribute this treatment? If to any

secret principle of the constitution, let it be mentioned; let us learn, that the government we have long revered is not without its defects, and that while it gives freedom to a part, it necessarily enslaves the remainder of the empire. If such a principle exists, why for ages has it ceased to operate? Why at this time is it called into action? Can no reason be assigned for this conduct? Or must it be resolved into the wanton exercise of arbitrary power? And shall the descendants of Britons tamely submit to this—No Sirs! We never will, while we revere the memory of our gallant and virtuous ancestors, we never can surrender those glorious privileges, for which they fought, bled, and conquered. Admit that your fleets could destroy our towns, and ravage our sea-coasts; these are inconsiderable objects, things of no moment to men whose bosoms glow with the ardor of liberty. We can retire beyond the reach of your navy, and, without any sensible diminution of the necessaries of life, enjoy a luxury, which from that period you will want; the luxury of being free.

We know the force of your arms, and was it called forth in the cause of justice and your country, we might dread the exertion; but will Britons fight under the banners of tyranny? Will they counteract the labours, and disgrace the victories of their ancestors? Will they forge chains for their posterity? If they descend to this unworthy task, will their swords retain their edge, their arms their accustomed vigour? Britons can never become the instruments of oppression, till they lose the spirit of freedom, by which alone they are invincible.

Our enemies charge us with sedition. In what does it consist? In our refusal to submit to unwarrantable acts of injustice and cruelty? If so, show us a period in your history, in which you have not been equally seditious.

We are accused of aiming at independence; but how is this accusation supported? By the allegations of your ministers, not by our actions. Abused, insulted, and contemned, what steps have we pursued to obtain re-

dress? We have carried our dutiful petitions to the throne. We have applied to your justice for relief. We have retrenched our luxury, and withheld our trade.

The advantages of our commerce were designed as a compensation for your protection: When you ceased to protect, for what were we to compensate?

What has been the success of our endeavours? The clemency of our sovereign is unhappily diverted; our petitions are treated with indignity; our prayers answered by insults. Our application to you remains unnoticed, and leaves us the melancholy apprehension of your wanting either the will, or the power, to assist us.

Even under these circumstances, what measures have we taken that betray a desire of independence? Have we called in the aid of those foreign powers, who are the rivals of your grandeur? When your troops were few and defenceless, did we take advantage of their distress and expel them our towns? Or have we permitted them to fortify, to receive new aid, and to acquire additional strength?

Let not your enemies and ours persuade you, that in this we were influenced by fear, or any other unworthy motive. The lives of Britons are still dear to us. They are the children of our parents, and an uninterrupted intercourse of mutual benefits had knit the bonds of friendship. When hostilities were commenced, when on a late occasion we were wantonly attacked by your troops, though we repelled their assaults and returned their blows, yet we lamented the wounds they obliged us to give; nor have we yet learned to rejoice at a victory over Englishmen.

As we wish not to colour our actions, or disguise our thoughts, we shall, in the simple language of truth, avow the measures we have pursued, the motives upon which we have acted, and our future designs.

When our late petition to the throne produced no other effect than fresh injuries, and votes of your legislature, calculated to justify every severity; when your fleets and your armies were prepared to wrest from us

our property, to rob us of our liberties or our lives; when the hostile attempts of General Gage evinced his designs, we levied armies for our security and defence. When the powers vested in the governor of Canada gave us reason to apprehend danger from that quarter; and we had frequent intimations, that a cruel and savage enemy was to be let loose upon the defenceless inhabitants of our frontiers; we took such measures as prudence dictated, as necessity will justify. We possessed ourselves of Crown-Point and Ticonderoga. Yet give us leave most solemnly to assure you, that we have not yet lost sight of the object we have ever had in view, a reconciliation with you on constitutional principles, and a restoration of that friendly intercourse, which, to the advantage of both, we till lately maintained.

The inhabitants of this country apply themselves chiefly to agriculture and commerce. As their fashions and manners are similar to yours, your markets must afford them the conveniencies and luxuries, for which they exchange the produce of their labours. The wealth of this extended continent centres with you; and our trade is so regulated as to be subservient only to your interest. You are too reasonable to expect, that by taxes (in addition to this) we should contribute to your expense; to believe after diverting the fountain, that the streams can flow with unabated force.

It has been said, that we refuse to submit to the restrictions on our commerce. From whence is this inference drawn? Not from our words, we having repeatedly declared the contrary; and we again profess our submission to the several acts of trade and navigation passed before the year 1763, trusting nevertheless in the equity and justice of Parliament, that such of them as, upon cool and impartial consideration, shall appear to have imposed unnecessary or grievous restrictions, will, at some happier period, be repealed or altered. And we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British Parliament as shall be restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpose of

securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefits of its respective members; excluding every idea of taxation internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their consent.

It is alleged that we contribute nothing to the common defence. To this we answer, that the advantages which Great Britain receives from the monopoly of our trade, far exceed our proportion of the expense necessary for that purpose. But should these advantages be inadequate thereto, let the restrictions on our trade be removed, and we will cheerfully contribute such proportion when constitutionally required.

It is a fundamental principle of the British constitution, that every man should have at least a representative share in the formation of those laws, by which he is bound. Were it otherwise, the regulation of our internal police by a British Parliament, who are, and ever will be, unacquainted with our local circumstances, must be always inconvenient, and frequently oppressive, working our wrong, without yielding any possible advantage to you.

A plan of accommodation (as it has been absurdly called) has been proposed by your ministers to our respective Assemblies. Were this proposal free from every other objection, but that which arises from the time of the offer, it would not be unexceptionable. Can men deliberate with the bayonet at their breast? Can they treat with freedom, while their towns are sacked; when daily instances of injustice and oppression, disturb the slower operations of reason?

If this proposal is really such as you would offer, and we accept, why was it delayed till the nation was put to useless expense, and we were reduced to our present melancholy situation? If it holds forth nothing, why was it proposed? Unless indeed to deceive you into a belief, that we were unwilling to listen to any terms of accommodation! But what is submitted to our consideration? We contend for the disposal of our property. We are told that our demand is unreasonable, that our

Assemblies may indeed collect our money, but that they must at the same time offer, not what your exigencies or ours may require, but so much as shall be deemed sufficient to satisfy the desires of a minister, and enable him to provide for favourites and dependants. A recurrence to your own treasury will convince you how little of the money already extorted from us, has been applied to the relief of your burthens. To suppose that we would thus grasp the shadow, and give up the substance, is adding insult to injuries.

We have nevertheless again presented an humble and dutiful petition to our sovereign; and to remove every imputation of obstinacy, have requested his majesty to direct some mode, by which the united applications of his faithful colonists may be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation. We are willing to treat on such terms as can alone render an accommodation lasting, and we flatter ourselves that our pacific endeavours will be attended with a removal of ministerial troops, and a repeal of those laws, of the operation of which we complain, on the one part, and a disbanding of our army, and a dissolution of our commercial associations, on the other.

Yet conclude not from this that we propose to surrender our property into the hands of your ministry, or vest your Parliament with a power which may terminate in our destruction. The great bulwarks of our constitution we have desired to maintain by every temperate, by every peaceable means; but your ministers (equal foes to British and American freedom) have added to their former oppressions an attempt to reduce us by the sword to a base and abject submission. On the sword, therefore, we are compelled to rely for protection. Should victory declare in your favour, yet men trained to arms from their infancy, and animated by the love of liberty, will afford neither a cheap nor easy conquest. Of this at least we are assured, that our struggle will be glorious, our success certain; since even in death we shall find that freedom which in life you forbid us to enjoy.

Let us now ask what advantages are to attend our reduction? The trade of a ruined and desolate country is always inconsiderable, its revenue trifling; the expense of subjecting and retaining it in subjection certain and inevitable. What then remains but the gratification of an ill-judged pride, or the hope of rendering us subservient to designs on your liberty.

Soldiers who have sheathed their swords in the bowels of their American brethren, will not draw them with more reluctance against you. When too late you may lament the loss of that freedom, which we exhort you, while still in your power, to preserve.

On the other hand, should you prove unsuccessful; should that connexion, which we most ardently wish to maintain, be dissolved; should your ministers exhaust your treasures, and waste the blood of your countrymen, in vain attempts on our liberty; do they not deliver you, weak and defenceless, to your natural enemies.

Since then your liberty must be the price of your victories; your ruin, of your defeat:—What blind fatality can urge you to a pursuit destructive of all that Britons hold dear?

If you have no regard to the connexion that has for ages subsisted between us; if you have forgot the wounds we have received fighting by your side for the extention of the empire; if our commerce is not an object below your consideration; if justice and humanity have lost their influence on your hearts; still motives are not wanting to excite your indignation at the measures now pursued: Your wealth, your honour, your liberty are at stake.

Notwithstanding the distress to which we are reduced, we sometimes forget our own afflictions, to anticipate and sympathise in yours. We grieve that rash and inconsiderate councils should precipitate the destruction of an empire, which has been the envy and admiration of ages, and call God to witness! that we would part with our property, endanger our lives, and sacrifice every thing but liberty, to redeem you from ruin.

A cloud hangs over your heads and ours; e'er this reaches you, it may probably burst upon us; let us then (before the remembrance of former kindness is obliterated) once more repeat those appellations which are ever grateful in our ears; let us entreat heaven to avert our ruin, and the destruction that threatens our friends, brethren, and countrymen, on the other side of the Atlantic."

The foregoing address was ordered to be printed, and transmitted by Mr. Penn to England. The letter to the lord mayor, aldermen, and livery of London, was read and agreed to.

The remonstrance of the Lord Mayor, &c., for which the thanks of the Congress was thus given, attracted great attention at the time, for the boldness with which it espoused the doctrines contended for by the colonists, and was much admired for the elegance and the vigor of its style. It was written by Arthur Lee, who had now become a distinguished advocate in London, at the request of the common hall. The letter of thanks to that body, was written by R. H. Lee. Thus were the two brothers, on different sides of the Atlantic, earnestly serving their common country. On the return of Mr. Arthur Lee to America, and after the toils and dangers of the revolution had ended in peace and security, the two brothers informed each other that they had been the authors of these papers, and each produced the original in his own hand-writing. From these manuscripts, the author copies the following elegant letter to the lord mayor.

"My Lord—Permit the delegates of the people of twelve ancient colonies to pay your lordship, and the very respectable body of which you are head, a just tribute of gratitude and thanks, for the virtuous and unsolicited resentment you have shown to the violation of the rights of a free people. The city of London, my lord, having, in all ages, approved itself the patron of liberty, and the

support of just government against lawless tyranny and oppression, cannot fail to make us sensible of the powerful aid our cause must receive from such advocates; a cause, my lord, worthy the support of the first city in the world, as it involves the fate of a great continent, and bids fair to shake the foundation of a flourishing, and, until lately, a happy empire.

North America, my lord, wishes ardently for a lasting connexion with Great Britain, upon terms of just and equal liberty; less than which generous minds will not offer, nor brave and free ones be willing to receive.

A cruel war has, at length, been opened against us; and whilst we prepare to defend ourselves like the descendants of Britons, we still hope that the mediation of wise and good citizens will prevail over despotism, and restore harmony and peace, on permanent principles, to an oppressed and divided empire.

We have the honour to be, my lord, with great esteem, your lordship's faithful friends and fellow-citizens."

The account of the services of Mr. Lee, in the session of the Congress of '75, is here interrupted for a moment. The reader has been told, that Mr. Lee was not only doubtful of an accommodation between the mother country and the colonies, but that he began to doubt whether there were any real benefits in a continuance of a political connexion between them. In the two public papers just read, a warm desire for a continuance of the connexion is expressed. It will be remembered, that as a member of a committee, Mr. Lee was not at liberty to express his private opinions. Few men in the colonies, even at this time, had thought of independence. The dread of the power of England uniting with the affection even yet cherished for the parent state, operated to repress that "noble aspiration after good," which expanded the bosoms of Mr. Lee, S. Adams, Henry, and a few others. The sentiments expressed in the publications of Congress, at this time, were those of the great majority of the people and of the Congress. To

show this, a letter will be presented to the reader, from "an unknown friend," which had been conveyed to Mr. Lee, in such a manner, that he never could ascertain either the writer or the "sage," whose councils are thought so worthy of consideration. Mr. Lee's sentiments seemed to have been known to the writer, or to have been suspected by him; as he treats the idea of independence as utterly wild, while the mother country "retained so much power on the ocean." The communication is really a curious one, and throws light on the times in which it was written.

"EASTON, JUNE 1st, 1775.

HONOURED SIR—An ancient, and accounted *a long headed man*, in these parts, has dropped some hints devising a scheme of reconciliation between the mother country and the colonies, which I think worthy of consideration: and I am persuaded your zeal for a reconciliation is such, that you will lend an ear to healing propositions, let them come from what quarter they may; otherwise, you would be unworthy of the eminence of character you possess, for republican candour of sentiment. He observed, 'suppose the Congress were to offer as much to the Crown, as all the duties amount to by a proper estimate;' meaning such duties as we agree they have a right to lay: as regulations of trade, and that exempt from all impositions by the Crown, called *running*—which might easily be assessed on each province, by having recourse to their books of entry, and making, at the same time, an allowance for what are run, which is thought to be as much again: and besides this, to offer a number of forces well disciplined, in case of requisition, as was the case in the two last wars; so many hundred or thousand from each province, according to its importance, and ship, pay, and victual and clothe the same; or some, or all, as Congress judges best; and the same to continue for a certain season, or during an expedition, as was the case in the attack in the last war, on Carthagena and Havana. At least the most strenuous endea-

vours ought to be made, in some way or other, to effect an accommodation, considering what lamentable confusion and distress must attend the quarrel, if it continues any length of time; *and the idea of aiming at Independence* at present, affords the most frightful of all prospects, whilst the mother country has such power on the ocean.

Your unknown friend and humble servant,

PHILOPATRIA.

P. S. I had like to have forgotten the venerable sage would have insisted that all the obnoxious acts of Parliament should be repealed at the same time that the above offers should be made; the one to be made the inseparable condition of repealing the other; and in the space of ten, fifteen, or twenty years, an additional quantity of troops and money might be offered, in case of pressing requisitions from home, according as the colonies flourish, and trade increases; but still the mode of raising, as well as the quantity, to be wholly left in the power of the colonial assemblies. And to confess the truth, the within letter, on account of your reputed eloquence in the Congress, I direct to you, as it is the more likely you will thereby have more influence on that august assembly; though you are under no obligation, but may still pursue your own opinions."*

The petition to the King, adopted in this session, expressed as much loyalty as that adopted in the preceding session. The reader cannot but be entertained by a letter written to Mr. Lee, by General Charles Lee, on the style of this second petition. It exhibits the boldness and impetuosity of the writer's character. The loyalty and submissive spirit of the petition might have had the effect General Lee feared; for nothing but the idea that the colonies were afraid to come to an open rupture, could so have blinded the ministry.

* Taken from the original manuscript letter.

"CAMP ON WINTER HILL,
SEPTEMBER 2, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND—We have just heard of the strange manœuvre of sending back the clothing which was taken from Philadelphia. I have only time to express my astonishment and apprehension that this conduct will betray some degree of fear, than which nothing can be more pernicious both here, and on the other side of the water. Upon this principle, I must confess I was shocked at your last address to the king—I am confident it will do mischief—It will bring on a negotiation, which, perhaps will be fatal. That callous tyrant must have his fears alone worked upon. If I did address him, I would do it in the following style. 'Sir, if you do not withdraw your troops upon the receipt of this, we will absolve ourselves from all allegiance to you, and we will divorce ourselves forever from Britain, whose abject patience in suffering such tyranny as that she has experienced through your whole reign, renders her totally unworthy to be the presiding power of a great empire.'

This is the style you should adopt, it is the only style which can possibly succeed. I rejoice that Congress has made the acquisition of your brother. My love and respects to him. Have you received my long scroll? For God's sake, let me hear from you soon. God bless you my dear friend, and send the sommon cause, all the success it merits from a righteous Being. Farewell.

Yours most truly and sincerely,

CHARLES LEE."*

On the 12th instant, it was resolved, "that a committee of five be appointed to devise ways and means to protect the trade of these colonies."† Mr. Lee was a member of this committee. He was also a member of a committee with his much esteemed friends S. Adams,

* From the manuscript. † See Jour. p. 163.

and J. Rutledge, whose business was to revise the Journals, and prepare them for the press.*

During the short interval between the adjournment of Congress, which took place on the first day of August, and the meeting of that body in September, of the same year, Mr. Lee was in Virginia, and was actively engaged in all the important political transactions of that time. He was still a member of the general Assembly of the colony, and also, a delegate to the convention. He attended at the meeting of the first body, which was called together by the proclamation of Lord Dunmore, to consider Lord North's "conciliatory proposition," and during this summer, served in the convention which met in July. The business which employed this session of the convention, was of great importance to the colony. The regal government was nearly dissolved, and a state of anarchy and war was fast hastening on. The external and internal relations of the colony, were involved in danger, difficulty, and darkness. It may here be mentioned, that Mr. Lee was about this time chosen lieutenant of the county of Westmoreland; which rank, in imitation of the English lord lieutenants of the county, gave him the command in chief of all its militia. Hence, after this period, he is frequently styled in the Journals of the Congress, "Colonel Lee." The activity and efficiency with which he discharged the duties of this office, will be seen in another part of this Memoir.

On Wednesday, the 5th of September, 1775, the Congress met, a third time, in Philadelphia.

To this second Continental Congress, Mr. Lee had been appointed a deputy by the convention of Virginia, in the summer of '75. His labours and deliberations were daily becoming more vitally important to America. War had commenced its fearful career, and the cause of liberty was now committed to the valour and fortitude of the American people. The subjects which most engaged the present Congress, were the naval and military

* See Jour. p. 177.

defence of the union, and the pecuniary means of resistance. These subjects required great labour and wisdom, both in the house and in its committees. In the most important committees, Mr. Lee served with unremitted industry; and the discussions of the Congress daily added to his reputation as a statesman and an orator. On the twenty-fifth instant the Congress took into consideration several letters from General Washington, on the military concerns of the colonies. It was resolved "that a committe of three be appointed to prepare an answer." The ballots were taken, and Messrs. Linch, Lee, and Adams were chosen.*

On the twenty-ninth, a letter from General Washington, received by express, accompanied with several papers, was laid before Congress, and read. It was resolved, "that a committee of three members be appointed to repair immediately to the camp at Cambridge, to confer with General Washington, and with the governors, councils, &c. of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, touching the most effectual means of continuing, supporting, and regulating, a continental army. It was also resolved, that a committee of five members be appointed to draw up instructions for the said committee." The ballots were examined, and Mr. Lee was chosen one of it.†

On the eighteenth October, the delegates from New Hampshire, laid before Congress part of their instructions, requesting them to obtain advice from it, on the best method of administering justice, and regulating the civil police of that colony. It was resolved, "that a committee of five members be appointed to consider the instructions given to the delegates from New Hampshire, and report their opinion thereon." Mr. Lee was chosen one of this committee.‡ On the thirtieth, four members of whom Mr. Lee was one, were chosen "to be added," to a former committee of three, and these seven, to be a committee to carry into execution, as well the resolu-

* See Journal, p. 209. † Ibid. 210. ‡ Ibid. 225.

tions of the thirteenth instant, as those of this day, for fitting out armed vessels."*

The campaign to the north, daily became more active, and the conferences between Congress and their commanders became, therefore, more frequent. General Schuyler, at this time, commanded a separate division of the army. On the second of November it was resolved, "that a committee of three be appointed, to proceed to the north, and confer with General Schuyler; and that they pursue such instructions as may be given them in charge by Congress; and that a committee of five be appointed, to prepare instructions for the said committee." Mr. Lee was chosen one of the latter committee.†

About this time several ministerial proclamations were published, and widely distributed through the colonies. They denounced Congress and all the conventions, committees of correspondence, &c. of the colonies, as treasonable meetings; and threatened the utmost vengeance of civil and military law, against all who should aid in carrying into execution any of their measures. As these proclamations had considerable effect, in many parts of the country, Congress determined to notice them, and accordingly, on the thirteenth of November, it was resolved "that a committee be appointed, to prepare an answer to sundry illegal ministerial proclamations, which have lately appeared in America." Mr. Lee was chosen chairman of this committee.‡ Congress having received information that certain frauds were attempted to be practised in the execution of continental contracts, it appointed a committee, on the twenty-third instant, "to inquire into the matter." On this committee Mr. Lee was chosen.§

On the eleventh of December, it was *Resolved*, "That a committee be appointed to devise ways and means of furnishing the colonies with a naval armament, and that it consist of a member from each colony." Mr. Lee

* Journal, p. 227. † Ibid. p. 230. ‡ Ibid. p. 248.
§ Ibid. p. 256.

was chosen from the deputation of Virginia.* The committee reported on the thirteenth instant. This report having given birth to the American navy, would be interesting to the reader. It may be seen in page 292 of the Journals, volume I. On the fourteenth, it was *Resolved*, "That a committee consisting of a member from each colony, be appointed to carry into effect the said report." The ballots being counted, Mr. Lee was chosen from the Virginia delegation.† On the sixteenth, Mr. Lee was chosen on two committees. The duty of one was to confer with Major Preston, and fix upon an agent to negotiate bills, and supply the prisoners taken at St. Johns; the duty of the other, was to consider what allowance ought to be made for officers, who are prisoners of war. The appointment of Mr. Lee, on committees of this nature, is mentioned to show in what estimation his talents were held, "in the severer test of intellectual excellence, the dry details of business."‡ The choice being by ballot, shows the sense entertained of him as a man of business, by the body of which he was a member.

The Congress continued its session without adjournment, into the year 1776.§ This year was to be the period from which the Independence of the United States should be dated. The war was increasing in violence and widely spreading its scenes of bloodshed. The business of Congress became more laborious, continued and important. The journals of its proceedings bear ample testimony to the labours and services of Mr. Lee. Among the committees appointed upon subjects of the first importance, and of difficult, practical business; the reader will perceive by a reference to the journals,

* See Jour. p. 289. † Ib. p. 292.

‡ Life of P. Henry, p. 108

§ See Jour. vol. ii. p. 4. From this period, committees of minor importance though embracing subjects of "dry details of business," will not be mentioned.

that he served upon almost every one which was charged with the military concerns of the nation.

On the thirtieth of January, 1776, it was *Resolved*, "That a committee of five be appointed to take into consideration, an application from the committee of safety of New York." Mr. Lee made one of this committee.* On the twenty-fifth of February, it was *Resolved*, "That a committee of five be appointed to contract for the making of muskets and bayonets for the use of the army, and to devise ways and means of encouraging the making of fire arms, in all parts of the continent. Of this committee Mr. Lee was one.† On the eleventh of March, he was chairman of a committee of three appointed to confer with General Lee, on the ways and means of defending New York.‡ On the nineteenth of March, Mr. Lee was chosen by ballot, one of the secret committee. On the succeeding day, he was chosen one of a committee of three to whom was referred the propriety of a war office.§

On the twenty-second of April, sundry letters were received and laid before Congress, viz. one from the Canada commissioners; one from General Washington; one from General Schuyler, enclosing several letters from Canada, &c. It was *Resolved*, "That these letters and papers be referred to a committee of five, of which Mr. Lee was chairman.‖ On the twenty-fifth instant, two other letters were received from General Washington, which were referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was chairman.¶ On the sixth of May, the Congress sat in committee of the whole, to consider the state of the united colonies, and reported to the House several resolutions, one of which was "That ten millions of dollars be raised for carrying on the war, for the current year." It was *Resolved*, "That a committee of seven be appointed to consider ways and means for raising the ten millions. Mr. Lee was chosen

* Jour. p. 45. † Ib. p. 74. ‡ Ib. p. 88. § Ib. p. 97.
‖ Ib. p. 143. ¶ Ib. p. 148.

one of this committee.* Several letters were received, one from General Washington, one from W. Palfrey, paymaster general, &c. which on the eighth instant were referred to a committee of five, of which, Mr. Lee was one.† On the tenth it was *Resolved*, "That it be recommended to the several Assemblies and Conventions of the colonies, in which governments suited to the exigency of affairs, have not been established, to adopt such forms of government, as shall best conduce to their safety and the welfare of America in general. A committee of three was appointed "to prepare a preamble to the foregoing resolution." The members chosen were Messrs. J. Adams, Rutledge, and Lee.‡

A letter dated 10th of May, from Major General Charles Lee, was received and referred to a committee of five. To this committee were also referred several papers accompanying the said letter. Mr. Lee was chairman of this committee.§ On the twenty-first, several papers were laid before Congress and read; viz:—three letters from Gen. Washington enclosing letters and papers of intelligence from England, and copies of treaties made by his Britannic majesty with the Duke of Brunswick for 4084 of his troops; with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel for 12,000 of his troops; with the Count of Hannau for 668 of his troops; a letter from the paymaster general with his account, &c. &c. It was resolved, that these papers be referred to a committee of five, who should be instructed to extract and publish the treaties, and such parts of the intelligence as they thought proper, and to consider a proper reward for the person bearing the intelligence; and, "to prepare an address to the mercenaries who are coming to invade America." Mr. Lee was chosen one of this committee.‖

On the twenty-third instant, it was resolved, that a committee of five be appointed "to confer with General Washington, Generals Gates and Mifflin, upon the

* See Jour. p. 160. † Ib. p. 162. ‡ Ib. p. 166.
§ Ib. p. 176. ‖ Ib. p. 179.

most speedy and effectual means of supporting the American cause in Canada." Mr. Lee was one of this committee.* On the twenty-fifth, General Washington attended by order of Congress, and after some conference with him, it was *Resolved,* "that a committee be appointed to confer with General Washington, Major General Gates, and Brigadier General Mifflin, and to concert with them a plan of military operations for the ensuing campaign." Of this committee, Mr. Lee was one.†

* See Jour. p. 186. † Id. p. 190.

CHAPTER VII.

The period was now approaching, when the continental Congress were about to take the decisive step, of dissolving the union between Great Britain and the colonies. This measure was not the act of ambitious men, who sought their own aggrandizement, regardless of the welfare of their country. It was the act of the most virtuous set of men with which history makes us acquainted. It was the measure of wise patriots, who, in common with their countrymen, felt the burden of oppression, and appreciated freedom, as the source of all private safety, and public happiness.

In the commencement of the dispute between the colonies and the mother country, the former claimed only those fundamental rights, which the British constitution guaranteed to all the subjects of the crown of England, and which had been productive of the happiest effects, as was evident, from their unexampled growth and prosperity. The inhabitants, descendants of Englishmen, had, for centuries, felt a common interest in the prosperity of the parent country; and had been taught, both by precept and experience, to consider the British constitution as the happiest, because the most effectual safeguard of human rights.

It was not wonderful, therefore, that the people of the colonies should so long have endured insult and injury; should so long have spoken the language, only of supplication and remonstrance. It is not wonderful that the wealth, the naval power, and military prowess of Great Britain, should so long have repressed the faintest idea of separation and independence.

In the early part of the year 1776, a large portion of the people of the colonies, still asked for nothing more

than a redress of grievances. A considerable number still considered those grievances the effect of unconstitutional proceedings, and unwarrantable demands. Many of the most judicious and able citizens, friends of the colonies, had not yet aspired to independence—they would have dreaded the horrors of civil war, and would have despaired of success, had the noble aspiration ever lifted up their minds.

The following letter of General Charles Lee, refers to the spirit predominating at this time.

"WILLIAMSBURG, May 10th, 1776.

My dear Friend—Your brother and I think, from the language of your letters, that the pulse of the Congress is low, and that you yourself, with all your vigour, are by collision, somewhat more contracted in your hopes than we wished to have found. If you do not declare immediately for positive independence, we are all ruined. There is a poorness of spirit and languor in the late proceedings of Congress, that I confess frightens me so much, that at times, I regret having embarked my all, my fortune, life, and reputation, in their bottom. I sometimes wish that I had settled in some country of slaves, where the most lenient master governs. However, let the fate of my property be what it will, I hope I shall preserve my reputation, and resign my breath with a tolerable degree of grace.

God bless you—I cannot write more at present.—'Ah Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.'

Yours, most entirely,

Charles Lee.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee."

There were, however, many enlightened men, who had long foreseen the ultimate effects of ministerial measures. They had never hoped, for to them, no ground of hope appeared, that supplication or meek remonstrance would arrest the course, or alter the system of colonial administration. They early predicted, that

submission or *resistance* would be the fate, or the choice of the colonies. Believing that the course of things tended to this end, they had secretly indulged their love of liberty, in visions of free and confederated republics; and growing indignant at the wrongs heaped upon themselves and their countrymen, they had boldly reasoned with themselves, of "unalienable rights, and of national independence." The reader will have already distinguished Mr. Lee, as a leader of this class of men. He will remember, that upon the first intelligence of the declaratory act in '64, he had warned an English correspondent and politician, to consider, "that possibly this step (the declaratory act) of the mother country, though intended to oppress, and keep us low, in order to secure our dependence, may be subversive of that end. That poverty and oppression among those whose minds are filled with British liberty, may introduce a virtuous industry, with a train of manly and generous sentiments, which, when in future, they become supported by numbers, may produce a fatal resentment of parental care being converted into tyrannical oppression." He will recollect the opinions held by Mr. Lee, the language used, and the conduct pursued, from the very commencement of the troubles in America, up to this period. He will particularly recollect, the motion made by him, early in the first session of the continental Congress, "to arm the militia of the colonies;" his support of a motion made subsequently, in the Assembly of Virginia, by Patrick Henry, to arm the militia of that colony; and his opinion, that the colonies could successfully maintain a contest with Great Britain. The reader must perceive a bolder tone of indignation against the English government pervading the speeches, and the writings of Mr. Lee, than was consistent with the views of one, who sought redress of grievances merely. He will recollect, that General Gadsden of South Carolina, has said, that during the existence of the stamp act, Mr. Lee had invited him to become a member of a corresponding association, which was to suggest the idea of indepen-

dence, as the discontents of the people should become louder and stronger, against the unconstitutional administration of the English government.

For the last two years, Mr. Lee had been an avowed advocate for independence, and spoke with great confidence of the event of a contest. His speeches in the Assembly, and to the people of Westmoreland; his conversation among all classes of people in Virginia; his opinions strongly and eloquently enforced in his intercourse with the public men of that state, all conspired to prepare, and at length to determine his countrymen of Virginia, to declare that colony free and independent. On the 17th of May, 1776, the convention which had assembled on the sixth instant, unanimously resolved, "that the delegates appointed to represent this colony in the general Congress, be instructed to propose to that respectable body, to declare the united colonies free and independent states, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the crown or Parliament of Great Britain; and to support whatever measures may be thought proper and necessary by the Congress for forming foreign alliances, and a confederation of the colonies, at such time and in such manner, as to them may seem best—provided, that the power of forming governments for, and the regulations of the internal concerns of each colony, be left to the respective colonial legislatures." The convention proceeded to the establishment of a regular independent government.

The continental Congress being the point of union, and the organ of efficient opposition, attracted the anxious attention of the ministry. They watched that body with earnest attention, and in terms of haughty vengeance, denounced its proceedings. They considered it the focus, to which all the heat and temerity of rebellion tended, and from which, they were reflected with tenfold intensity and power. The proceedings of the colonial Assemblies and conventions, had ceased to occupy their thoughts since the Congress multiplied all their apprehensions. The raising of an army, and the ap-

pointment of a commander-in-chief with every military power, had appeared but as the presumption of ill-advised and deluded rebels, who yet might be alarmed, or soothed into submission. But neither the ministry nor the people of Great Britain, had ever entertained the apprehension, that the colonies would dare to aspire to independence. It was to be expected, therefore, that a declaration of independence would excite the astonishment of the latter, and the fiercest indignation of the former. It was then not without reason apprehended, that the person who should propose, that the colonies be declared independent, would be marked out as that daring rebel, whose spirit should be quenched, and whose condign punishment should be made a terrible warning.

Amidst the hesitation of some colonies, the foreseen opposition of many able men of the Congress, the malice of the tories, the perils of war with its unknown issues, and the vengeance of the ministry, Richard Henry Lee moved the resolution, (in these his own words,) "That these united colonies are, and of right, ought to be, free and independent states; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."*

It has been seen, that the convention of Virginia had instructed her delegates in Congress, to propose to that body, to declare the colonies independent. As soon as the instructions arrived, they† appointed Mr. Lee to move a resolution conformably to it. The opinions and wishes of Mr. Lee, were well known to them, the boldness and decision of his character were suited to the crisis. His eloquence and political information peculiarly fitted him for the discussions, which, it was anticipated, would follow the motion.

That it was the opinion of Congress, that the member who made the first motion on the subject of independ-

* See Journal, p. 204.

† Mr. Wythe was at the head of the Virginia delegation, his name standing first on the list of deputies.

ence, would certainly be exposed to personal and imminent danger, may be inferred from the manner in which that motion is entered on the Journal. In the Journal of Friday, June the seventh, it is thus stated, "certain resolutions respecting independence being moved and seconded, *Resolved*, that the consideration of them, be deferred until to-morrow morning; and that the members be enjoined to attend punctually at ten o'clock, in order to take the same into their consideration." The reader will see, that neither the name of him who moved the resolutions, nor of him who seconded them, is mentioned. Richard Henry Lee moved, and John Adams seconded them.* The long debates which followed, (from the seventh of June, to the fourth of July,) show that the measure proposed by the resolution, was considered one of fearful hazard, and awful responsibility.

On the eighth, the Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the resolutions respecting independence; and, after some time, the president resumed the chair, and Mr. Harrison reported, that "the committee having taken into consideration the matter to them referred, but not having come to any resolutions, they directed him to move for leave to sit again on Monday." It was also resolved, "that the Congress will, on Monday next, at ten o'clock, resolve themselves into a committee of the whole, to take into further consideration the resolutions referred to them."

On Monday, June tenth, the order of the day being before the house, the Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole, "to take into further consideration the resolution to them referred." After several hours had been spent in debate, the president resumed the chair, and the chairman of the committee reported a resolution thereon. The resolution agreed to, in the

* See Marshall's Life of Washington, and Ottis' Ed. of the Chevalier Botta's History of the American Revolution.

committee of the whole Congress, being read, it was resolved, "That the consideration of the *first resolution be postponed* to the first Monday in July next, and in the meanwhile, that no time be lost, *in case the Congress agree thereto*, a committee be appointed to prepare a declaration, to the effect of the first resolution, which is in these words, to wit: "That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."*

It has already been seen by the reader, that the discussion upon Mr. Lee's motion for independence, continued from the seventh of June until the tenth, and that the deliberation of Congress on that day, ended in the adoption of a resolution, to appoint a committee to prepare a declaration. He will perceive, from the language of the resolution adopted on the tenth instant, that it was yet doubtful whether the resolution moved by Mr. Lee would be finally agreed to. The declaration was to be prepared, "that no time should be lost, in case the Congress might agree to adopt one." The resolution was opposed, so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, (from conversation with the late Governor Johnson, of Maryland, a member at the time of the discussion,) by no one, as impolitic and improper at *all times*, but as imprudent at *that time*. Some of the arguments against its present adoption were, the want of money; munitions of war; of disciplined and efficient armies; on the part of the colonies, the seeming tardiness of several colonies in declaring their wishes on the subject; the power and strength of Britain, by sea and land; and the yet unknown course of foreign governments, during the contest which would follow. Many able and virtuous patriots urged these, and similar topics, with great force. The leading advocate of immediate adoption, was R. H. Lee. Tra

* See p. 206, of Journal.

dition (for we have no written history of this great and interesting debate) still relates, that he prefaced his motion with a speech, which was the effort of a mind of transcendent powers. He reviewed, in accurate and luminous detail, the rights of the colonies, and the violations of these rights by the mother country. He stated the resources of the colonies, and the advantages they would derive from union amongst themselves; the extent of their territory, and its capacity of defence, with a fulness of knowledge which was at once striking and wonderful. He dwelt upon the probable conduct of the continental powers, especially of France and Spain, with almost prophetic foresight, and demonstrated, with the skill and ability of a profound statesman, their policy in the event of a separation from Great Britain. He continued, during the debate, from the seventh to the tenth, to urge every topic, which his acute and well-stored mind could conceive, in support of his motion. He addressed, in splendid and persuasive eloquence, every patriotic and noble passion which could be felt by freemen; and in rich declamation, adorned by the finest allusions of classic story, portrayed the beauties of liberty, with her train of blessings, law, science, and glory. Memory has preserved a faint outline of his first speech, and pronounces the following, as the concluding sentences, with which he introduced his memorable motion: "Why then, sir, do we longer delay? Why still deliberate? Let this happy day give birth to an American republic! Let her arise, not to devastate and conquer, but to re-establish the reign of peace and of law. The eyes of Europe are fixed upon us; she demands of us a living example of freedom, that may exhibit a contrast, in the felicity of the citizen, to the ever increasing tyranny which desolates her polluted shores. She invites us to prepare an asylum, where the unhappy may find solace, and the persecuted repose. She intreats us to cultivate a propitious soil, where that generous plant, which first sprung and grew in England, but is now withered by the poisonous

blasts of Scottish* tyranny, may revive and flourish, sheltering under its salubrious and interminable shade, all the unfortunate of the human race. If we are not this day wanting in our duty to our country, the names of the American legislators of '76, will be placed by posterity at the side of those of Theseus, of Lycurgus, of Romulus, of Numa, of the three Williams of Nassau, and of all those whose memory has been, and for ever will be, dear to virtuous men and good citizens."

On the evening of the tenth, Mr. Lee received, by express from Virginia, the distressing intelligence that his lady was dangerously ill. This circumstance compelled him to ask leave of absence for a short time. He left Philadelphia on the eleventh instant; and on that day a committee of five members were chosen to draught a declaration of independence. The members were Messrs. Jefferson, J. Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and R. R. Livingston. The absence of Mr. Lee alone deprived him of the honour of being chairman of the committee to draw a declaration of independence, according to the uniform rule in all deliberative bodies, to appoint that member chairman of the committee, which is selected to report on any motion which he has made, and which has been adopted.

Mr. Jefferson having been appointed chairman of the above-mentioned committee, it was assigned to him to prepare a draught of the declaration, to be reported to Congress. On the first of July, according to the resolution of the tenth ultimo, the order of the day was read: when it was resolved, "that this Congress will resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the resolution respecting independence; and that the declaration be referred to the said committee." After some time spent in debate, the president resumed the chair, and Mr. Harrison reported, that the commit-

* The Scotch were extremely unpopular in the American colonies, during the revolution, in consequence of the fact that Lord Bute, Lord Mansfield, &c. were advocates of the right to tax America.

tee had come to a resolution, which they desired him to report, and to ask leave to sit again. The resolution agreed to, by the committee of the whole, being read, "the determination thereof was, at the request of a colony, postponed until to-morrow." The Congress on this day finally resolved, that it would sit in committee of the whole to-morrow, "to take into consideration the declaration respecting independence." On the second of July the Congress resumed the consideration of the resolution reported from the committee of the whole, which was agreed to as follows: "*Resolved*, that these colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all political allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved." It was thereupon resolved, "that the Congress will again to-morrow resolve itself into a committee of the whole, to take into further consideration the declaration respecting independence." On the third, agreeably to the order of the day, the Congress in committee of the whole house, took into further consideration the declaration reported by the chairman of the committee for that purpose; but not having finished their deliberations on that day, "they desired leave to sit again." It was accordingly resolved, that the Congress would on to-morrow again sit in committee of the whole, to take into further consideration, the declaration to them referred. On the fourth of July, agreeably to the order of the day, the Congress in committee of the whole, took into their further consideration the declaration; and after some time, the president having resumed the chair, Mr. Harrison reported, that the committee had agreed to a declaration, which they desired him to report. The declaration being read, was agreed to. Here follows, in the Journal, the Declaration of Independence, so long and so much admired for its chaste, dignified, and eloquent style; the principles of which are still (and it is hoped will be for ages to come,) ardently cherished.

The original draught then of the Declaration, as written by Mr. Jefferson, was debated for several days, paragraph by paragraph; the Congress amending, adding, or striking out from it, words, sentences, or paragraphs. Thus was this celebrated paper adopted and published! It marks the commencement of one of the most signal eras, recorded in the history of the world! Its publication inspired with the liveliest joy and hope, the breast of the illustrious patriot who moved, and so strenuously, and ably, and hazardously, advocated the immediate adoption of the resolution on which it is founded. With him his virtuous compeers joyed and hoped. "Joy elevated, hope brightened their crests." May their decendants, under the providence of that Lord God Almighty, who gave them victory, long protect the noble fabric which has been erected on an immutable basis; *the natural freedom and equality of all men!!*

It has been mentioned that Mr. Lee had been called to Virginia, on the eleventh of June. He remained some time absent from Congress. Shortly after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Mr. Jefferson wrote to him, enclosing the original draught, which he had drawn in the committe, and also a copy of the declaration as adopted by Congress. The original was carefully preserved by Mr. Lee; not only for the interest he felt in its history, but for the great respect and warm friendship he felt for Mr. Jefferson. It has been as carefully preserved by his family, and finally committed to the author.*

Whatever may be the literary merit of the original draught, candour will admit that it was improved by the alterations suggested in Congress. Candour will admit with equal promptness, that all of the finest passages of

* A copy of the letter, and of the draught, is given in appendix number five. The endorsement on it which is in these words "The Declaration of Independence as originally reported to Congress," is the autograph of Mr. Lee, as also the endorsement on the accompanying letter, "letter of Thomas Jefferson, Esq. July eighth, 1776."

the Declaration, as it was finally adopted, are the production of Mr. Jefferson; and that one paragraph, at least, in the original draught, which was struck out from the copy agreed to by Congress, might have been retained. The paragraph beginning with these words "he has waged a cruel war, &c." contains some fine and energetic sentences. It is worthy of remark, especially at the present day, when by a resolution of the Congress of the United States, the slave trade has been declared to be piracy, and by the same resolution the maritime nations of Europe and America, are invited to consent that it shall henceforth be so considered by the law of nations, that Mr. Jefferson was the first American statesman, and probably the first writer of modern times, who denounces that infamous traffic as a "piratical warfare."* The only reason, which appears fully to account for the rejection of this eloquent passage of the original draught, is, that as Congress was enumerating those acts of aggression upon the rights of the colonies, in which George III. might be considered an individual aggressor, as having given his assent to the obnoxious laws mentioned, or as having done the acts complained of by his own authority, it was thought unjust and perhaps untrue, to charge him with the cruelties and horrors of the slave trade. This trade it will be recollected had been carried on long before his reign. It is probable that George III. never gave his assent to any law on that subject, except to that which declared its abolition. In the clause of the original draught that upbraids George III. with the hiring and sending foreign mercenary troops to invade America, among those mentioned, the *Scotch* are specified. It was said that Dr. Witherspoon, the learned president of Nassau Hall College, who was a *Scotchman* by birth, moved to strike out the word "*Scotch,*" which was accordingly done.

The fame of R. H. Lee, in reference to the question

* This resolution was moved by Charles F. Mercer, Esq. of Virginia.

and Declaration of Independence, has not, unfrequently, been placed in competition with that of Mr. Jefferson. The true history of this celebrated period, furnishes no ground for this. Whatever merit is due to the part which Mr. Jefferson acted on this occasion, and whatever fame is justly ascribable to him, as the writer of the original draught, and the chief author of the present copy of the declaration, they are distinct from the merit and fame of Mr. Lee. All the prominent acts of the political life of the latter gentleman, both in the legislature and conventions of Virginia, and in the continental Congress, distinguished him as an intrepid advocate of independence. He made the first direct motion upon the subject in the latter body, in which situation, he could not fail to be marked out by an implacable ministry; and publicly, amid danger, doubt, and dismay, zealously, and ably maintained the right and policy of immediate and total separation from the state of Great Britain.*

* The following extract and anecdote, show the opinions of men, as to the perils of this period: "And should the same dispassionate consideration of the subject be resumed, for another purpose, it will be found, that at no time of the struggle, from the symptoms of disaffection, to the period when a small minority of the oppressed, gave battle to their oppressors in the eastern colonies, to the declaration of the majority against tyranny, though clothed in the venerable habiliments of British law, and to the consummation of their independence, was there a period so critical, as when that declaration was first proposed by R. H. Lee. Let it be supposed, for a moment, that it had been rejected! How different would have been the present situation of America! France would have had no confidence in a people, who had none in themselves, and to this hour, America might have been a part of the British empire. The Americans, until this paper was published to the world, had done nothing which their king might not have forgiven with dignity.—*Extract from P Allen's History of the American Revolution.*

It is related of Mr. B. Harrison, of Virginia, and of Mr. Gerry, of Massachusetts, that after they had signed the Declaration of Independence, Mr. Harrison, who was a very large, fat man, said to Mr Gerry, who was thin, "*when the hanging scene comes*, I shall have the advantage of you—for all will be over with me, while you will be still kicking in the air."

An informed and grateful posterity will readily acknowledge, and cheerfully ascribe to this great man, the fame which patriotism has long since awarded to him, to the justice of which, history bears its admiring attestation. Perhaps, it may not be too bold, to hazard the prediction, that whenever a patriot, in either hemisphere, shall hereafter look with admiration and joy upon the freedom and glory of the United States, in his warmest accents, he will call on the name of Richard Henry Lee, and bid one of the father's of his country, hail!"*

Authentic anecdotes show that his name immediately became known in Europe, and particularly in England, and that the ministry kept him steadily in their eye, during the whole war.

A son† of Mr. Lee, was, at the time of the declaration of independence, at school in St. Bees, in England. From him, the writer has heard some anecdotes illustrating this fact. The ministerial papers, which gave the first intelligence of this event, to the inhabitants of that place, headed the column containing American news, thus: "Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry, have at last accomplished their object: The colonies have declared themselves independent of the mother country." One day, as this youth was standing near one of the professors of the academy, who was conversing with a gentleman of the neighbouring country, he heard the question asked, "what boy is this?" to which the professor answered, "he is a son of Richard Henry Lee,

* One of the revolutionary patriots, Colonel Humphreys, has paid him a fine compliment In a poem he wrote on the subject of the new federal constitution, when deploring the difference of opinion on this subject, which existed between many of the revolutionary worthies, he thus alludes to R. H. Lee, who opposed it;

> "Why asunder are they torn,
> Why *his* loss should millions mourn,
> *Who, to glad the astonished earth,*
> SPOKE *an empire into birth.*"

† Ludwell Lee, Esq., of Virginia.

of America." The gentleman, upon hearing this, put his hand upon his head, and said, "we shall yet see your father's head upon Tower Hill;" to which the boy answered, "you may have it, when you can get it."

Governor Johnson, of Maryland, told the writer, that shortly after the war, he heard from an English gentleman of great respectability, who had lived in London during the revolution, and who had opportunities of hearing a good deal of the plans and intentions of the ministry, that they had intended, in the event of the reduction of the colonies, to have demanded the delivery of General Washington and Richard H. Lee, and to have executed them as the principal rebels. The writer was acquainted with a person, who, for many years, was a manager on Mr. Lee's estate. His integrity and character for truth, were more than ordinarily respected. He often related as a fact, the following incident: He had been at a wedding some distance from Mr. Lee's residence, which was immediately on the banks of the Potomac, and returned late at night. Not more than half an hour after his return, the door of the house in which he was, was forced open, and a midshipman and a captain of marines, attended by several armed men, entered his room, and commanded him to tell whether Richard H. Lee, was not in the dwelling-house or somewhere upon the farm. He declared that he was not. Suspecting that fidelity to his employer induced him to deny the truth, they then offered him a purse containing many guineas, if he would tell them where Mr. Lee was. He told them that Mr. Lee had that morning set out for Philadelphia, to the Congress. They then hastily returned to their boat. Mr. Lee, however, was only four miles distant from the house.

General Charles Lee, it will be recollected by the reader, was taken prisoner in December, 1776, and was closely confined by the British commander, Lord Howe, in New York. While in captivity, General Lee wrote a letter to Mr. Lee, in which he tells him that General and Lord Howe, had given him permission to

write to Congress. The purpose for which he wrote, he states to be, to induce Congress to send two or three gentlemen to New York, to whom he could communicate what deeply interested the public. He urges Mr. Lee to come, assuring him that he would be safe under the word of Lord Howe. The Congress, however, had not equal confidence with Gen. Lee, in Lord Howe's word, and rejected his request. The friendship which Mr. Lee entertained for General Lee, the generous sympathy which he felt for his misfortune, prevailed for a time over his judgment, and strongly inclined him to visit, in his private character, his distressed and captive friend, who had so disinterestedly devoted his life and services to America. His particular friends, and many members of Congress, earnestly remonstrated against such a hazardous step, under the general belief, that he was known to the British ministry, and to the commanders of the British armies, as the mover of the declaration of independence, and was on that account, so obnoxious to them, that no faith would be kept with him. Mr. Lee yielded to their remonstrance, and to the conviction of his own understanding, which for a time had been in *servitude* to his heart. He tells his friend, in reply, that "he had not the smallest idea of personal danger." He briefly and faintly alludes to the impossibility of his compliance with the request which General Lee had so earnestly pressed. His reply is marked with the brevity of deep feeling, and with the language of manly grief, which swells the bosom when it cannot serve its friend in the hour of need. The reader will pardon the transcription of General Lee's letter, and Mr. Lee's answer.

[*Letter from Gen. C. Lee, to R. H. Lee.*]

"My dear Friend—Lord and General Howe, have given me leave to write to the Congress. My request is, that they will suffer two or three gentlemen to repair

to New York, to whom I wish to communicate what certainly deeply interests me, and I think full as much the public. If you should be nominated, I beg you will set out with all possible expedition, as expedition in the present crisis of affairs, is of very material consequence. I would not urge you, (I know you too well,) to act against your opinion; but, as I cannot see the least ill consequences which can attend the measure, I cannot help expressing my wishes that you would use your influence to accomplish it. You will be in perfect security, for the word of Lord and General Howe, as gentlemen, are unquestionably to be depended upon; and, abstracted from all public considerations, you would, I am confident, undergo much greater inconvenience than this journey to serve one who is,

Most truly and affectionately yours,

CHARLES LEE.

To RICHARD HENRY or FRANCIS LEE, ESQ."

[*Reply of R. H. Lee.*]

"PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 11, 1777.

MY DEAR FRIEND—My feelings are not be described. I would go to every extremity to serve my friend, and the able friend of liberty and mankind. But here my power fails. I have not the smallest idea of personal danger, nor does this affect the present question.

Farewell, my dear friend, may you be as happy as you deserve, then the cause of humanity will have nothing to fear for you.

RICHARD HENRY LEE."*

While Mr. Lee was in Virginia, he received a letter from Mr. Samuel Adams, giving him an interesting account of the public affairs, and of the effect of the

* Both the above letters are taken from the original manuscripts. The reader will find, in Appendix, No. 6, a letter from General Charles Lee, to Lord Percy, while he was with the British army in Boston. It is due to his memory, to present this letter to the public.

declaration of independence upon the country. This letter cannot fail to be interesting.

[*Letter from Samuel Adams, to R. H. Lee.*]

" PHILADELPHIA, JULY 15th, 1776.

MY DEAR SIR—I must acknowledge, that when you left Congress, I gave you reason to expect a letter from me before this time. You will not, I am very certain, attribute my omission to the want of a most cordial esteem for you. The truth is, I hardly know how to write, without saying something about our Canadian affairs; and this is a subject so thoroughly mortifying to me, that I could wish totally to forget all that has passed in that country. Let me, however, just mention to you, that Schuyler and Gates are to command the troops, the former while they are without, the latter while they are within, the bounds of Canada. Admitting these generals to have the accomplishments of a Marlborough, or an Eugene, I cannot conceive that such a disposition of them will be attended with any good effects, unless harmony subsist between them. Alas! I fear this is not the case. Already, disputes have arisen, which they have referred to Congress; and, although they affect to treat each other with a politeness becoming their rank, in my mind, altercations between commanders who have pretensions so nearly equal, (I mean in point of command) forebode a repetition of misfortune. I sincerely wish my apprehensions may prove to be groundless.

General Howe, as you have heard, is arrived at New York. He has brought with him from eight to ten thousand troops. Lord Howe arrived last week, and the whole fleet is hourly expected. The enemy landed in Staten Island. Nothing has been done, saving that last Friday, about three in the afternoon, a forty and twenty gun ship, with several tenders, taking the advantage of a fair and fresh gale, and flowing tide, passed by our forts as far as King's Bridge. General Mifflin, who commanded there, in a letter of the fifth instant,

informed us that he had twenty-one cannon planted, and hoped, in a week, to be formidable. Reenforcements have arrived from New England, and our army are in high spirits. *I am exceedingly pleased with the calm and determined spirit which our commander-in-chief has discovered in all his letters to Congress. May heaven guide and prosper him.** The militia of the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, are all in motion. General Mercer commands the flying camp in the Jerseys. We have just now appointed a committee to bring in a plan for the reenforcement, to complete the numbers of twenty thousand men to be posted in that colony.

Our declaration of independence has given vigour to the spirits of the people. Had this decisive measure been taken nine months ago, it is my opinion, that Canada would by this time have been in our hands. But what does it avail to find fault with what is past? Let us do better for the future. We were more fortunate than we expected, in having twelve of the thirteen colonies in favour of the all-important question. The delegates from New Jersey were not empowered to give their voice on either side. Their convention has since acceded to the declaration, and published it even before they received it from Congress. So mighty a change in so short a time! New Jersey has finished her form of government, a copy of which I enclose. They have sent five new delegates, among whom are Dr. Witherspoon and Judge Stockton. All of them appear zealously attached to the American cause. A convention is now meeting in this city, to form a constitution for this colony. They are empowered by their constituents, to appoint a new committee of safety to act for the present, and to choose new delegates for Congress. I am told there will be a change of men, and if so, I hope for the better.

A plan of confederation has been brought into Congress, which I hope will be speedily digested, and be made

* Yet, Judge Johnson has represented Samuel Adams as an enemy to Generals Washington and Greene.

ready to be laid before the several states for their approbation. A committee has now under consideration a plan of foreign alliance. It is high time for us to have ambassadors at foreign courts. I fear we have already suffered too much by delay. You know on whom our thoughts were turned when you were with us.

I am greatly obliged to you for favouring me with the form of government agreed upon by your countrymen. I have not yet had time to peruse it, but I dare say, it will be a feast to our little circle. The device on your great seal pleases me much.

Pray hasten your journey hither. Your country most pressingly solicits, or, will you allow me to say, *demands* your assistance here. I have written in great haste.

Adieu, my dear sir, and be assured that I am, very affectionately, your friend,

S. Adams."

CHAPTER VIII.

Congress was about to exercise the highest attribute of political sovereignty, in the formation of treaties with foreign nations. Mr. Lee had long looked upon the contracting of treaties of alliance with some of the great powers of Europe, rivals of Britain, as the policy which would most essentially serve our cause. As soon, therefore, as he could leave home, he returned to Congress, in time to aid in that most important business. On the twenty-seventh of August, it was *Resolved*, "that the plan of treaties, with the amendments, (which had been made in committee of the whole House,) be referred to the committee who brought in the original plan, in order to draw up instructions, pursuant to the amendments." It was ordered, that two members be added to the committee: the members chosen were Messrs. Lee and Wilson.* On the seventh of September it was *Resolved*, that two members be added to the committee appointed on the twenty-fourth of July last, to consider the proposal made by the president of South Carolina, respecting General Lee, in room of those absent: Messrs. Lee and Walton were chosen.† On the fourteenth of October, a committee of three was appointed, to devise ways and means for supplying the treasury with a further sum of money. The members chosen were Messrs. Lee, Wilson, and Hall.‡ A committee of five was appointed, on the thirty-first of October, to prepare an effectual plan for suppressing the internal enemies of America, and preventing the communication of intelligence to the enemy.§ Of this committee, Mr. Lee was one.‖ He was chairman of a

* Jour. p. 330. † Ib. p. 346. ‡ Ib. p. 415.
§ Ib. p. 439. ‖ Ib. p. 478.

committee, to whom was referred a plan of an artillery yard, which had been laid before Congress.* On the following day, he was chosen chairman of a committee, who were ordered to consider and report a proper plan for establishing and training cavalry, in the continental army.† Several letters from Generals Washington, Ward, Gates, and Morgan; a petition and remonstrance from the captains and subalterns of Colonel Mackay's battalion; a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Wilson, and one from Colonel Hazard, were received, read, and on the 9th instant referred to the committee on the northern army. It was ordered, that another member be added to that committee: Mr. Lee was the member chosen.‡ On the same day, he was chosen on a committee, with Dr. Witherspoon and S. Adams, to prepare an address to the people of America, and a recommendation to the several states to appoint a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer.§

On the ninth of December, several letters were received from Generals Washington, Sullivan, and Wooster; and several from R. Morris, Esq.; and were referred to a committee of four, of which Mr. Lee was chairman. On the twenty-sixth of the same month, it was *Resolved*, that a committee of three be appointed, to take into consideration the state of the army, and report thereon tomorrow. Of this committee, Mr. Lee was chairman. It reported on the following day, in which a minute view of the military concerns of the colonies was given.

This report contained a proposition of a novel and highly important nature. It was a proposition *so far to enlarge the powers of General Washington*, as to create him almost dictator. A jealousy of military power had long characterized the people of England, and of the colonies. The salutary principle of the absolute subordination of the military to the civil power, was a fundamental principle of the English constitution, and was

* Jour. p. 480. † Ib. p. 493. ‡ Ib. p. 506.
§ Ib. p. 508.

strictly enforced and jealously guarded by the people of North America. No man ever more uniformly maintained this principle than Mr. Lee. The crisis, however, was an awful one. Britain was putting forth her gigantic strength, to crush, at once, the rights of the colonies. The prospect was, indeed, dark and foreboding, at the close of the year '76. The Congress was forced, by the pressure of an overruling necessity, to pass an act vesting great and extraordinary powers in General Washington. That body was sensible of the delicacy of the step. Murmurs against the measure were heard from several quarters, which induced the Congress to address a communication to the governors and assemblies of the states, explanatory of this resolution. This address had the desired effect. The character of Washington, no doubt, greatly tended to gain the acquiescence of the states. This illustrious citizen exercised these powers, as he exercised all others entrusted to him by his country, for its good alone. It has been seen, that Mr. Lee was the chairman of the committee which proposed the measure of granting extraordinary powers to the commander in chief. That part of the report conferring those powers, was found among Mr. Lee's manuscripts, in his own hand writing; with which, the report in the Journal almost entirely corresponds. On the twenty-eighth it was "*Resolved*, That a committee should be appointed to prepare a circular letter to the several states, explaining the reasons which induced Congress to enlarge the powers of General Washington, and requesting them to co-operate with him, and give him all the aid in their power." The members chosen were Messrs. Lee, Wilson, and Adams.* The letter was draughted by Mr. Lee, and is here copied from his original manuscript.

"Sir—Ever attentive to the security of civil liberty, Congress would not have consented to the vesting of

* See Jour. p 509.

such powers in the military department, as those, the enclosed convey to the continental commander in chief, if the situation of public affairs did not at this crisis, require a decision and vigour, which distance and numbers deny to Assemblies, far removed from each other, and from the immediate seat of war. The strength and progress of the enemy, joined to the prospect of considerable reenforcements, have rendered it not only necessary, that the American forces should be augmented beyond what Congress had before designed, but that it should be brought into the field with all possible expedition. These considerations therefore induced Congress to request, in the most earnest manner, that the fullest influence of your station may be exerted, to aid such levies as the general shall, in consequence of the powers now given him, direct; and that your quota of battalions, formerly fixed, may be completed, and ordered to head quarters with all the despatch an ardent desire to secure the public happiness can dictate."

A treaty of alliance with France and Spain, had long been considered by Mr. Lee, as a measure of vital importance to the colonies. He long argued that policy, no less than the jealousy of the power of Great Britain, entertained, particularly by France, would induce these powers to take a direct part in favour of American liberty. As soon, therefore, as independence had been declared, he strenuously advised the immediate appointment of ambassadors to the courts of these nations. The Congress being fully sensible of the importance of such a step, appointed commissioners to the court of Versailles. Before they sailed Mr. Lee moved in Congress several instructions to be given them, all of which were agreed to. These heads of instructions are here copied from the original manuscript in Mr. Lee's handwriting.

"As the scarcity of arms, artillery, and other military stores, is so considerable, would it not be proper to instruct the ambassador to France, that he press for an immediate supply of twenty, or thirty thousand stand of well fitted muskets and bayonets, a good supply of brass

field-pieces, gunpowder, &c. That these be sent under convoy. That a few good engineers be sent.

"It seems very clear that France does not mean to let America sink in the present contest. But distance, and the difficulty of giving a true account of our condition, may be the cause of opinions being entertained of our power to support the war on our own resources, longer than we can in fact do. Considering this, may it not be proper for the ambassador to press for an immediate declaration of France, upon the suggestion that our *re-union* with Great Britain might be endangered by longer delay. Should Spain be disinclined to our cause, from apprehension of danger to her South American dominions, cannot France be prevailed upon (at our request and upon our assurances,) to guarantee to that crown, her colonies here, from any molestation from us. Should not the ambassador give us the most speedy and effectual intelligence of his progress, that it may concern us to have."

During the period from October, 1776, when the commissioners sailed for France, until a treaty was concluded with that country, Mr. Lee carried on a continued and full correspondence with his brother, Arthur Lee, Esq. one of them, in which he gave him every information relative to the military and political affairs of the United States. This intelligence, thus received and communicated to the other commissioners, was of essential advantage to them in conducting their negotiations to a successful conclusion. The reader will find, in appendix number eight, several interesting letters from the Congress, through their committee of correspondence, of which Mr. Lee was a member. They were written by him. They are here copied from original manuscripts, in his hand writing. They contain a more complete account of the state of the American confederacy, than can be elsewhere found. They show the ease with which Mr. Lee blended the minuteness of detail of a man of business with the comprehensive views of an enlightened statesman. On the twenty-eighth of

January, 1777, it was resolved that a committee of three be appointed to take into consideration the state of Georgia. Mr. Lee was one of this committee.* It was on this day ordered, that the proceedings of the committees from the four New England states, which were under the consideration of the whole Congress, be referred to a committee of five; of which Mr. Lee was chosen chairman.† But a few of the numerous committees on which Mr. Lee served during the months of January and February, 1777, have here been mentioned. The reader will find, (if he take the trouble to examine the Journals of these months,) that he was continually employed on committees to which were referred the "driest details of business," without the diligent and skilful performance of whose duties, the great business of war could not have gone on.‡

On the ninth of April, it was resolved, that a committee of five be appointed "to consider what steps are necessary to be taken by Congress, and recommended to the state of Pennsylvania, for opposing the enemy, if they should attempt to penetrate through New Jersey and attack Philadelphia; that the said committee be instructed to confer with the executive council of the state of Pennsylvania on this subject, and with the general officers now in Philadelphia." Mr. Lee was chosen one of this committee.§ The reader will find in the appendix, number seven, a letter from this committee to General Washington, on the subject of the defence of the city of Philadelphia. It was written by Mr. Lee, and is there copied from his original manuscript. On the thirteenth instant the committee of appeals from the admiralty courts, reported, that they had heard the appeal in the case of the claimants and owners of the brigantine Shelburne, fully argued, and that the committee being equally divided in opinion, no verdict could

* Journal, third volume, p. 39. † Ibid. p. 52.

‡ Such as related to the clothing and feeding the armies, &c. &c. § Journal, p. 127.

be given. The Congress resolved, "that a committee of five be appointed, to rehear and determine the said appeal." Mr. Lee was chosen one of this committee.* On the following day he was chosen one of a committee to confer with the executive council of the state of Pennsylvania, and with the board of war of that state on military concerns.† An appeal being delivered, on the sixteenth instant, to the secretary, from a judgment of a court of admiralty, held at Plymouth in the state of Massachusetts, on a libel against the schooner Industry, it was *Resolved*, "that it be referred to the standing committee of appeals." It was then moved, that it be referred to a select committee of four. This motion prevailed, and Mr. Lee was chosen one of its members. On the twenty-third instant, it was *Resolved*, "that a committee of six be appointed to devise ways and means for speedily reenforcing General Washington's army." Of this committee Mr. Lee was one.‡

The long and laborious services of Mr. Lee in Congress, had now shaken his constitution. From this period of his life, he never enjoyed good health, although he continued in public. On the fifth June, it was *Ordered*, "That Richard Henry Lee have leave of absence, his health and private affairs requiring his return to Virginia."§

Justice to his reputation required his presence in Virginia. It will be with difficulty believed, in those days, in which hatred of tyranny, a love of freedom, and respect for great and good men, seemed to have been so generally felt, that there were men, both in, and out of the legislature of Virginia, who envied the fame and popularity of Mr. Lee, and slandered his character. It would be thought, that the patriotism of Mr. Lee, could not have been doubted. It was not by virtuous and enlightened men, nor indeed, by those wicked and designing persons, who raised a clamour against him. Their malice, however, at last, served only to brighten his fame.

* See Journal, p. 134. † Ibid. p. 136. ‡ Ibid. p. 152.
§ Ibid. p. 214.

The Virginia legislature, in common with Congress, had been compelled to issue great quantities of paper money during the year '76, and the winter of the year '77. The invariable consequence followed, a depreciation of the currency. Mr. Lee, when the non-intercourse associations mentioned in a former part of this Memoir, were formed, had agreed with his tenants on a tract of land in the upper part of the state, to commute their rents in money. into rents of produce. This circumstance, although a favour conferred on his tenants, at a time when there was no market for their produce, served, in a change of circumstances, as a basis for the charge of the envious and disaffected. They insinuated, that he was, in heart, a *tory*, and was, in reality, an *enemy* to the cause of America; that he had refused to take the money of the state, in payment of rents due by his tenants, with a design to depreciate its value, and thus to embarrass the public efforts to maintain the war. They charged him with several other crimes against the public good: Among others, they accused him with having favoured the interests of New England, to the injury of the interests of Virginia. Such is the propensity of corrupt human nature, to delight and believe in whatever can suggest doubts of the virtue of those who are eminently illustrious, that the above charges against Mr. Lee were widely circulated, and by many, credited.

In May '77, the Virginia Assembly met, and soon after its session commenced, it proceeded to the annual election of deputies to the Congress. At this election, Mr. Lee was left out. Having been informed of the charges made against him, and being, as it has been mentioned, indisposed, he returned home. He had been recently re-elected by the county of Westmoreland, a member of the Assembly of Virginia, and a short time after his arrival at home, went to Richmond, to demand an inquiry into his public conduct. The following account of this transaction of Mr. Lee's life, is taken from an elegant and accurate continuation of Mr. Burk's

History of Virginia, page 225. "Thomas Nelson, one of the delegates then in Congress, was compelled, by the bad state of his health, to resign that station, no less laborious than honourable. George Mason was appointed in his place; and, by the joint ballot of both Houses, Benjamin Harrison, George Mason, Joseph Jones, Francis L. Lee, and John Harvie, were elected delegates to the general Congress, from the eleventh August following. *Thus was Richard Henry Lee omitted in this appointment.* It appears, that reports injurious to the reputation and public character of that gentleman, had, in his absence, been alleged against him. This led him to solicit an inquiry by the House, into the nature of those allegations. The Senate attended this inquiry, and their presence gave additional solemnity to the scene. Several witnesses were examined, and Mr. Lee was heard in his place. His conduct had been pure, and his fame brightened by this ordeal. The Senate withdrew: and the House came to a resolution, in consequence of which, the speaker, the venerable George Wythe, addressed Mr. Lee in the following words:

'SIR—It is with peculiar pleasure that I obey this command of the House, because it gives me an opportunity, whilst I am performing an act of *duty* to them, to perform an act of *justice* to yourself. Serving with you in Congress, and attentively observing your conduct there, I thought that you manifested in the American cause, a zeal truly patriotic; and, as far as I could judge, exerted the abilities for which you are confessedly distinguished, to promote the good and prosperity *of your own country in particular*, and of the United States in general. That the tribute of praise deserved, may reward those who do well, and encourage others to follow your example, the House have come to this resolution:

'*Resolved*, That the thanks of this House be given by the speaker, to Richard Henry Lee, Esq., for the faithful services he has rendered his country, in discharge

of his duty, as one of the delegates from this state in general Congress.'*

To which, Mr. Lee answered:

'Mr. Speaker—I thank the House for this instance of candour and justice, which I accept the more willingly, as my conscience informs me, it was not undeserved. I consider the approbation of my country, sir, the highest reward for faithful services, and it shall be my constant call, to merit that approbation, by a diligent attention to public duty.

My thanks are particularly due to you, sir, for the obliging manner in which you have been pleased to signify the vote of the House, and I pray you, sir, to receive my grateful acknowledgments accordingly.'

The result of this investigation, having thus honourably dispelled the clouds, which, for a moment, obscured the political character of Mr. Lee, he was fully restored to the confidence of his fellow-citizens. In the course of the session, George Mason having resigned his appointment as a delegate, Richard Henry Lee was nominated, and appointed, in his room. The thanks of the Senate had, in the most flattering manner, been added to those of the House of Delegates."

Notwithstanding this honourable testimony of respect and gratitude, which the Assembly had borne to Mr. Lee's public services, those men who had *injured*, continued to *hate* him. So true is the remark of Tacitus, "proprium est humani ingenii, odisse, quem læseris." They continued, for some time, to slander him in private, and to harass him by their votes, at the annual election of delegates to Congress. Although they never afterwards succeeded in leaving him out, yet, on one occa-

* It is said, that Mr. Wythe shed tears, while addressing Mr. Lee.

sion, (1778) they so far succeeded in the gratification of their malignity, as to put him lower in the delegation than he had before been, or ever afterwards was. The following letter of Patrick Henry to Mr. Lee, alludes to these circumstances. It will give the reader some idea of the vigour and vehemence which characterized his speeches.

"WILLIAMSBURG, ... 18th, 1778.

My dear Sir—Both your last letters came to hand to-day. I felt for you, on seeing the order in which the balloting placed the delegates in Congress. It is an effect of that rancorous malice, that has so long followed you, through that arduous path of duty, which you have invariably travelled, since America resolved to resist her oppressors. Is it any pleasure to you, to remark, that at the same æra in which these men figure against you, public spirit seems to have taken its flight from Virginia? It is too much the case; for the quota of our troops is not half made up, and no chance seems to remain for completing it. The Assembly voted three hundred and fifty horse, and two thousand men, to be forthwith raised, and to join the grand army. Great bounties are offered, but I fear, the only effect will be, to expose our state to contempt, for I believe no soldiers will enlist, especially in the infantry. Can you credit it; no effort was made for supporting, or restoring public credit! I pressed it warmly on some, but in vain. This is the reason we get no soldiers. We shall issue fifty or sixty thousand dollars in cash, to equip the cavalry, and their time is to expire at Christmas. I believe, they will not be in the field before that time. Let not Congress rely on Virginia for soldiers. I tell you my opinion, they will not be got here until a different spirit prevails. I look at the past condition of America, as at a dreadful precipice, from which we have escaped, by means of the generous French, to whom I will be everlastingly bound by the most heartfelt gratitude. But I must mistake matters, if some of those men who traduce you, do not prefer

the offers of Britain. You will have a different game to play now, with the commissioners. How comes Governor Johnson there? I do not see how it comports with his past life.

Surely Congress will never recede from our French friends. Salvation to America, depends upon our holding fast our attachment to them. I shall date our ruin from the moment that it is exchanged for any thing Great Britain can say, or do. She can never be cordial with us. Baffled, defeated, disgraced by her colonies, she will ever meditate revenge. We can find no safety but in her ruin, or at least, in her extreme humiliation, which has not happened, and cannot happen, until she is deluged with blood, or thoroughly purged by a revolution, which shall wipe from existence, the present king with his connexions, and the present system, with those who aid and abet it.*

For God's sake, my dear sir, quit not the councils of your country, until you see us for ever disjoined from Great Britain. *The old leaven still works. The flesh pots of Egypt, are still savoury to degenerate palates.* Again we are undone, if the French alliance is not religiously observed. Excuse my freedom. I know your love to our country, and this is my motive. May Heaven give you health and prosperity.

I am, your's affectionately,

PATRICK HENRY."

Mr. Lee returned to Philadelphia, in August '78, and resumed his seat in Congress, on the 12th of that month.

* This was written in moments of exasperation, in the midst of war and carnage. No man more thoroughly detested the French jacobins, who tried a revolution on these principles, than Patrick Henry. In the enjoyment of independence and peace, he acknowledged that England could, with George III. at her head, maintain the relations of peace and amity. He lived to hear of the reply of George III., when introduced to the first minister of the United States to his court. "I was the last man, sir, in my kingdom, to acknowledge the independence of your country; I shall be the last one in it, now, to question it." Considering the circumstances, it is worth all the splendid sayings recorded of kings.

On his return to that city, he had the pleasure of being introduced to the Marquis de La Fayette, and the Baron De Kalb, who had now generously proffered their services to Congress. With both of these distinguished foreigners he became intimate, and the friendship between them, ever afterwards continued. The reader will peruse the letters of the former, accompanying this Memoir, with that interest which his name inspires in all who remember his early and warm attachment to America. He still remembers her struggle, and rejoices in her prosperity.

These gentlemen were introduced to Mr. Lee, by Mr. Carmichael, secretary to the commissioners to France.

"Sir—As your brother, Arthur Lee, Esq., is not on the spot, I take the liberty, in consequence of his request, to inform you of his health; he is now at Burgos, in Spain, where he remains in consequence of the request of the Spanish ministry, to negotiate on behalf of the United States. From what he writes me, I hope he will at least get some money on our account. Your brother, the Alderman, as I am just informed by a gentleman from London, is well.* I take the liberty of introducing to your notice and protection the Marquis La Fayette, and Baron De Kalb. The former is of the first distinction, for birth, fortune, and family here: the other, of the highest reputation in the service, and strongly recommended by the Marshal De Broglio, and the Marshal De Mallabois. The former's family, are our strong support. His uncle is ambassador at the court of London, and from his representations, we hope to bring on a war, much sooner than it would otherwise happen. I hope he, (the Marquis,) will have every reason to think favourably of the country.

* William Lee, who had been an Alderman in London, and who was a commissioner in '79, of the United States, to the courts of Holland and Germany.

I have the honour to be, with much respect, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM CARMICHAEL,
PARIS, MARCH, 1777.

Hon. R. H. LEE."

In consequence of the friendship and intimacy which existed between Mr. Lee, and the Marquis La Fayette, the French officers always sought his acquaintance and patronage. The gratitude which Mr. Lee felt towards France for her assistance, and to the French officers who volunteered their services in our army, made him, on all occasions, their avowed and warm friend. He always supported their application for commissions, wherever they possessed merit to make it at all prudent to employ them. The author has found among Mr. Lee's manuscripts, many communications from the French, and other foreign officers who had come to America. They seemed to have conceived for him the most exalted respect, and to have considered him a friend not of America only, but of mankind.

When the Baron de Kalb returned to France, before the close of the revolution, he found in Paris two sons of Mr. Lee, who had been sent to France to finish their education. He took these youths with him on a visit to the "Hotel de Noailles," the residence of the Marquis La Fayette, and introduced them to the marchioness, in these words: "I have the honour to present to you, madam, the sons of Richard Henry Lee, of America; the friend of the Marquis La Fayette, and of all the French officers, who have gone to America."*

In the year 1777, there were numerous applications made to Congress, by foreign gentlemen for commissions in the army. In several instances, Congress found great difficulty, and suffered no little perplexity, in ex-

* The author received this anecdote from one of the gentlemen, who was then a youth. He distinctly recollects the words of De Kalb, and the person and manners of the marchioness, and her kindness to him and his brother.

amining their claims to preference, adjusting their rank, and satisfying their wishes. On the eleventh of November, 1777, Mr. Lee was appointed chairman of a committee, to which a memorial from the Chevalier Dorset, and from the officers who accompanied Monsieur Du Coudray from France, and the applications of other foreign gentlemen attending Congress were referred.* His general acquaintance with all the foreigners who had come to America for employment, no doubt, occasioned his appointment as chairman of this committee.

The reader will find in the Appendix, number nine, a letter from the brave De Kalb, one from the generous Count Pulaski, and one from the intriguing, unfortunate, and repentant Conway.

Mr. Lee was the member through whom propositions were made to Congress from foreign gentlemen. Two notes from the French Consul have been found among Mr. Lee's manuscripts, offering a loan of a million of dollars, on behalf of several persons in France, to the United States. One of them is in the following words:

"April 5th, 1779.

Mr. Holker, presents his compliments to the Honourable Colonel Lee, and begs leave to observe to him, that it is very essential for the interests of the proprietors of the money, which he has taken the liberty of offering to Congress, as a loan, that Mr. Holker should know whether his proposal is accepted or not, so as he might immediately dispose of the money in some manner. He hopes Mr. Lee will take the matter into serious consideration, and will please to draw up his report in order if any thing is to be done, to retrieve lost time, every minute of which is of the greatest importance to the public of America." A special committee was appointed to consider the offer, of which Mr. Lee was chairman. The second note is addressed to him, as chairman of the special committee, and states the sum offered to be a million of dollars.

† See Jour. p. 488.

As soon as Mr. Lee resumed his seat in Congress, though still in a very feeble state of health, he was called to constant and active business, in consequence of his appointment on almost every committee of importance. On August sixteenth, there was a committee of five appointed, to take into consideration the state of the western frontiers, and the northern department, which was ordered "to report thereon, with all convenient despatch." On this committee Mr. Lee was placed.* On the twenty-second of October, he was chosen chairman of a committee to inquire into the conduct of Colonel George Morgan ;† according to his habit of performing the labours of the committees on which he acted, he wrote a long letter to a gentleman in Pittsburg, where Colonel Morgan commanded, in which the whole subject before the committee is stated with great minuteness, and sundry inquiries made respecting the conduct of that officer. The manuscript letter is in the handwriting of Mr. Lee. A few days before, he had been chosen one of a committee of three, to consider the best method of preventing intercourse between the towns possessed by the enemy and the country.

As soon as the intelligence of the capture of General Burgoyne had reached Congress, it was "*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed, to prepare a recommendation to the states, to set apart a day of thanksgiving, for the signal success lately obtained over the enemies of the United States." Mr. Lee served on this committee, which reported the following day.‡

While every reader acquainted with the proceedings of that illustrious body, the continental Congress, must admire the wisdom of their measures, the Christian reader must contemplate, with delight and veneration, the fervent and exalted piety evinced in their proclamations, recommending days of fasting, humiliation, and thanksgiving. In point of composition, too, they are not unworthy of those men who penned the celebrated state

* See Jour. p. 333. † Ib. p. 434. ‡ Ib. p. 465.

papers of 1774-5. *The wise and great men of those days were not ashamed publicly to confess the name of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! in behalf of the people, as their representatives and rulers, they acknowledged the sublime doctrine of his mediation!* He, "whose name is above every name;" at which "every knee shall bow;" who is "head of all principalities, and powers, and dominions;" to whom "angels, and authorities, and powers, in heaven and *on earth*, are made subject," exercises a gracious and mediatorial providence over the affairs of *nations* as well as over the destiny of individuals! Hence result the propriety, and *duty* too, of those in authority, to acknowledge the superintendence of His providence over the nation, and to return to Him their thanks for national blessings. For the omission of this duty, nations suffer "through all their borders." Rulers being responsible to the *people*, this ordination of God is just, *and particularly just* in the case of republics, in which the popular opinions and wishes can be enforced.

The following proclamation, for sentiment and style, is worthy of deliberate perusal. It is believed to be the production of Mr. Lee's pen. It partakes of the eloquence of his style, and of the fervour of his mind. It does not, however, breathe a holier spirit, than that which animated the breast of S. Adams, who was also one of the committee that reported it.

"NOVEMBER 1, 1777.
Done in Congress.

Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty *of all men, to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge, with gratitude, their obligations to Him for benefits received, and to implore such further blessings as they stand in need of; and it having pleased Him, in his abundant mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable bounties of his common providence, but also to smile upon us in the prosecution of a just and necessary war, for the independence and establishment of our unalienable rights and liberties; particularly in that He hath*

been pleased, in so great a measure, to prosper the means used for the support of our arms, and to crown them with the most signal success: It is therefore recommended to the legislative and executive powers *of these states, to set apart Thursday, the eighteenth December next,* for solemn thanksgiving and praise; *that, with one heart and one voice, the* people *may express the feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their Divine Benefactor! and together with their sincere acknowledgments and offerings, they may join the penitent confession of their manifold sins, whereby they have forfeited every favour, and their earnest and humble supplication, that it may please God,* through the merits of Jesus Christ, *mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance; that it may please Him, graciously to afford his blessings on the government of these states respectively, and to prosper the public council of the whole; to inspire our commanders, both by sea and land, and all under them, with that wisdom and fortitude which may render them fit instruments, under the providence of Almighty God, to secure for these United States the greatest of all blessings, independence and peace; that it may please Him to prosper the trade and manufactures of the people, and the labours of the husbandman, that our land may yield its increase; to take schools and seminaries of education, so necessary for the cultivation of the principles of true liberty, virtue, and piety, under his nurturing hand; and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom, which consisteth "in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost!"**

On the 3d of September, '77, Colonel Wilkinson, according to order, attended Congress, and laid before it, the original papers relating to the convention of Saratoga. On that day, a motion was made "for directing the future operations of General Gates." Mr. Lee was chairman of the committee, to which was referred the subject of the motion.† It is well known, that there

* See Journals, p. 467 † Ib p. 471

was some difficulty respecting the ratification of the convention of Saratoga. The question, how far the reigning power is bound to ratify a convention made by a commander, has long been much agitated by writers on the law of nations. It is a question not without considerable difficulty. On the 6th instant, the convention of Saratoga was referred to a committee of four, on which Mr. Lee was chosen.*

On the 10th instant, several propositions to add to the articles of confederation, were laid before Congress. This was a subject of vital importance to the union of the states, and one which required great caution and wisdom. The states were jealous of their rights, and their particular interests. On that day, it was *Resolved*, "that a committee of three be appointed, to take these propositions into consideration, and to report such as they may judge proper to be added, not altering those already agreed on." Mr. Lee was one of this committee.† This committee reported on the following day; and the consideration of the report, postponed until the thirteenth. It was on this day *Resolved*, "that the articles reported be adopted;" and it was *Resolved*, "that a committee be appointed to revise and arrange the articles of confederation, and to prepare a circular letter to the states, to accompany the said articles." Mr. Lee was the chairman of this committee.‡

It has been mentioned, that Mr. Lee's health had not been completely restored by his return to Virginia, in July. The fatigue of close attention to business, again forced him to remit public cares. On the 15th, it was ordered, "that Mr. Richard Henry Lee, have leave of absence, for the recovery of his health." Notwithstanding, however, the daily injury to his health, which Mr. Lee experienced, the deep interest he took in the public welfare, and his conviction of the increasing importance of the measures of Congress, still kept him a laborious member. On the 19th instant, the reader will find him

* See Jour. p. 489. † Ib. p. 497. ‡ Ib.

in Congress, acting on the most arduous committees until the 4th of December. Thus, several days after he obtained leave of absence, he was chairman of a committee of three, to which were referred, "the return of the ordinance, &c. taken from the enemy, enclosed in General Gates' letter of the 10th, and a letter from the council of safety of New York."* On the second of December, a committee of three were appointed, to recommend to the several states, to call in the paper money issued by them, under the authority of the king of Great Britain. Of this committee, Mr. Lee was chairman.† On the 4th instant, a letter from General Washington, and one from General Varnum, were laid before Congress, and referred to a committee of five, of which Mr. Lee was chairman.‡

The state of Mr. Lee's health now compelled him to return to Virginia, and to relinquish for a time, all public pursuits.

The attention of Mr. Lee, while in Congress, was not confined to the business of that body. His active mind was deeply engaged in all public concerns, and was constantly considering what could be done most conducive to the public good. Among other instances of this, which might be mentioned, the following may be here related: while he was still in Congress at York in Pennsylvania, there passed through that place a serjeant and eight men, whose term of enlistment had expired. When Mr. Lee heard of this circumstance, he hired a

* On the third of December, the committee on Indian affairs, reported a speech to be made to the Six Nations of Indians. It was written by Mr. Lee. It gives a pleasing instance of the ease with which he could adopt his eloquence to the bold and figurative style of those orators of nature. After reproaching them for their ingratitude to the United States, and expressing astonishment at their late conduct, it declares, it would have been as impossible to have expected it, as to have expected, "that the mole should overturn the vast mountains of the Alleghany, or that the birds of the air, should drink up the waters of the Niagara." See the whole speech at p. 555, vol. iii. Journals.

† Jour. p. 518—551. ‡ Ib. p. 561.

man to go after them with a letter to the serjeant and men, persuading them to return to the army, and pledging Mr. Lee's honour, to pay them the enlistment money and the cost of the conveyance of their baggage. He succeeded in getting them to return. While he was in Congress, engrossed with its business, he prepared a plan of defence of the coasts of Virginia, which received great eulogium from the military and naval characters of the day. As he was passing through Maryland on his return to Virginia, he heard that persons on both shores of the Potomac, carried on considerable traffic with the British ships of war in the Chesapeake Bay. He wrote from the tavern in which he was lodging for the night, letters to the governors of the states of Virginia and Maryland, informing them of this circumstance, and devising a method by which this intercourse might be prevented. The author has the manuscript copy of those letters also.

It was thought that the following letter from Arthur Lee to General Washington, written during the year in which the reader has been contemplating Mr. Lee's public career, would add a pleasing variety to the narration of this Memoir. Mr. Arthur Lee was for a time an accredited commissioner of the United States, to the court of Berlin. It contains an interesting anecdote of General Washington, and informs us too, of the opinion of the military men of Europe, of his talent as a general.* The manuscript copy of it was given by the writer to his brother R. H. Lee.

BERLIN, June 15th, 1777.

To his Excellency General Washington.

Dear Sir—It has been with uncommon satisfaction, that I have seen you in a situation in which I long hoped you would be, if we were forced to dispute the great question, which, in my own opinion, I was satisfied

* This letter too, may serve to prove further, the incorrectness of the charge contained in Johnson's life of Green, that the "Lees of Virginia were inimical to General Washington. Full proof to the same effect, can be given in relation to F. L Lee.

would happen. I never forgot your declaration, when I had the pleasure of being at your house in 1768, "that you were ready to take your musket upon your shoulder whenever your country called upon you." I heard that declaration with great satisfaction: I remember it with the same, and have seen it verified to your immortal honour and the eminent advantage of the illustrious cause in which you are contending.

I have the pleasure of assuring you that your conduct against General Howe, has been highly approved by military men, here and in France. That approbation has been increased in those to whom I have had an opportunity of stating the great inferiority of the troops you commanded, to those of the enemy, in number and in every provision for war.

The Prussian army, which amounts to two hundred and twenty-eight thousand, are disciplined by force of hourly exercise, and move with a rapidity and order which are certain to succeed against any troops in Europe. When the king reviews any army of forty thousand men, not a man or horse, the former in full march, the latter in full gallop, is discernibly out of line. The regiments are in the field every day, where, beside the general exercise, every man is filed off singly, and passes in review before different officers, who beat his limbs into the position they think proper, so that the man appears to be purely a machine in the hands of a workman. The improvements of utility which I have been able to note, are these; the ramrods are of double thickness all the way, and enlarged as ours are at one end. The advantage is to ram down the charge, so that they do not turn the rod, but raising it to the muzzle, they plunge the lower end into the barrel, and then raising it up, return it straight, without the necessity of turning it as formerly. This saves a great deal of awkward motion, and of time. The mouths of the loops are very large, so that there is much more readiness in hitting them than formerly; which also expedites the important business of charging. The musket, to compensate for this

increase of weight, is two inches shorter in the barrel. When the men present, instead of levelling their firelocks, they are taught to slant them down, so that a point blank shot would apparently strike the ground at about ten yards distance. This depression is found necessary to counteract the elevation, which the act of firing inevitably gives the musket; and even when a ball strikes the ground, it generally rises, and may do execution, but if directed too high it is lost entirely. These are alterations which seem to me of great utility, and I wish they may appear so to you.

It is my intention to write a history of this civil contention. The share you have had in it, will form an interesting and important part. It will be in your power to preserve a variety of material papers and anecdotes for such a work. May I venture to hope that you will think me so far worthy of your confidence as to preserve them for me? Dubious parts of history can be cleared only by such documents; and we shall want every authentic record to vouch against the forgeries which will be offered to the world.

The resources of our enemy are almost annihilated in Germany, and their last resort is to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. They have already experienced their readiness to go, every man of a regiment raised there last year, having obliged them to ship him off tied; and certainly they will desert more than other troops whatever. They themselves rely on the present campaign. They have no probability of reinstating their army, except with Roman Catholics of Ireland; should this campaign materially diminish it, I have a plan for rendering that of little effect, which, I hope, will succeed. Should you keep your ground, the question of acknowledging your independence, will become very serious, next winter, with the European Powers. But until the events of this summer are decided, their conduct will remain the same, and no open acts of interference will take place.

I am, dear sir, with great respect, yours, &c. &c.

ARTHUR LEE."

Mr. Lee was unable to return to Congress, before the first of May, 1778. He had been, in the preceding April, re-elected, from Westmoreland county, a member of the Assembly of Virginia. On the first of May, he took his seat in Congress; and on that day, he was chosen chairman of a committee of three, "to report proper instructions to the commissioners of the United States at foreign courts."* On the 4th instant, a letter from General Washington was read, and referred to a committee of three; of which committee, Mr. Lee was chairman.† On this day, despatches having arrived, bearing a treaty of alliance with France, a committee of three was appointed, to prepare proper forms of ratification of the treaty with his most Christian majesty; of this committee, Mr. Lee was chairman.‡ It was highly expedient, to inform the people of America, of the treaty of alliance with France, by an address, which should be calculated to inspire them with fresh hope and vigour. On the sixth instant, it was *Resolved*, "That a committee of three be appointed, to prepare an address to the inhabitants of these states, on the present situation of public affairs;" Mr. Lee was chosen chairman.§ On the eighth instant, this committee reported an address, which may be read in the fourth volume of the Journals, page 267. It is an eloquent production, and admirably well fitted, to arouse and inspirit. The author has no further proof that it was written by Mr Lee, than that to be derived from its style, and to be inferred from the fact, that he almost in every case, prepared the papers of committees on which he acted, especially, as chairman.

On the thirteenth instant, a letter was received from General Washington, enclosing one from General Sir William Howe, respecting an exchange of prisoners; which letters were referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was one.‖ On the next day, a memorial

* Jour. p. 251-2. † Ib. p 255. ‡ Ib. p. 257.
§ Ib. p. 265. ‖ Ib. p. 285.

from sundry inhabitants of Nova Scotia, was received, and referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was chairman.* On the seventeenth, a number of intercepted letters were laid before Congress; whereupon, it was *Resolved*, "That they be referred to a committee of three, and that the said committee be empowered to take such steps, and pursue such measures, as they judge necessary for the interests of the United States;" Mr. Lee was chosen chairman of this committee.† On the twenty-sixth, a memorial from the field officers, prisoners on parole on Long Island, was received, and referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was chosen chairman.‡ On the third of June, the committee to whom a letter of General Washington had been referred, reported; and, after debate, their report was re-committed, and two members were added to the committee; one of the members added, was Mr. Lee.§ Congress, on the fifth, resumed the consideration of the report of a committee, to which had been referred, a letter from General Wadesworth, commissary general of purchases. After debate, it was re-committed, and two members were added; one of which was Mr. Lee.‖ On the sixth, a letter from General Washington was received, enclosing letters from Lord Howe and General Clinton, together with three acts of the British Parliament, which were referred to a committee of four, of which Mr. Lee was one.¶ On the ninth, he was chosen chairman of a committee, to which were referred a letter of General Washington, and on the same day, one of a committee, to which were referred letters from General Gates.**

Lord North's "Conciliatory Propositions" were made known to Congress, by the letters of Lord Howe and General Clinton. General Washington informed Congress, that passports were required by Lord Howe for the commissioners, under the act of Parliament contain-

* Journal, p. 285. † Ibid. p. 291. ‡ Ibid. p. 309.
§ Ib. p. 326. ‖ Ib. p. 330. ¶ Ib. p. 331. ** Ib. p. 335.

ing the conciliatory propositions. This letter from General Washington, was referred to the committee appointed to consider those propositions, of which it has been mentioned, that Mr. Lee was chairman. While these highly important papers were yet before this select committee, a letter from General Green, quartermaster general, was received, and referred to a committee of three; Mr. Lee was one of this committee.* On the sixteenth, several letters, and other papers, were received from the British commissioners, which were referred to a committee of five; Mr. Lee was chosen chairman of the committee, which, in the afternoon of the same day on which it was appointed, reported a draught of an answer to be given to the commissioners.† The author has the original manuscript of this draught, in Mr. Lee's own hand writing. It corresponds exactly with the letter, as it is found in the journal, page 353, volume four. On the nineteenth, a letter was received from John Brown, Esq., president of the board of war, with a manifest of the cargo of the "Lady of Mount Carmel, and St. Antonio." This letter, &c., were referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was chairman.‡

It has been seen, that Congress had appointed a committee, to make such additions to the articles of confederation, as seemed to be necessary. Some of the states, to which these additions had been proposed for their adoption or rejection, had rejected some of the articles proposed by Congress, and suggested others in their room. After much debate, on the twenty-fifth, the subject was finally closed, by the consent of all the states to the articles of confederation, as then amended, and a committee of three was appointed, to prepare a form of solemn ratification. Mr. Lee was chairman of this committee, and prepared the form.§ He has been always honoured as one to whom the states owed the greatest debt of gratitude, on the subject of their con-

* See Jour. p. 340. † Ib. p. 346. ‡ Ib. p. 359. § Ib. p. 382-3.

federation and union, during the trying period of the revolution. He permitted no sectional jealousies to blind and pervert his judgment. Looking upon all the states to be equally interested in the great object for which they were contending, and feeling for all their inhabitants, the attachment of a fellow citizen, he deprecated the indulgence of distrust and jealousy of each other, and never failed to denounce the man who endeavoured to awaken such baneful passions.

On the 8th of July, Mr. Lee was one of a committee to which was referred, letters from Governors Trumbull and Livingston, together with many other papers of importance.* On the ninth, he was chosen chairman of a committee to draught a circular letter to those states, which had not yet ratified the confederation, according to the form prescribed on the report of the committee of the twenty-fifth ultimo. On the eleventh, he was chairman of a committee, whose duty was strictly "dry detail of business." From this period, to the fourth of August, he was on many similar committees. On that day, he was made one of a committee of three, to which was referred a letter received from General Washington on military affairs. On the same day, he was one of a committee of three, to which a memorial and petition on matters of dry business were referred; and, the committee was ordered to report specially.

Mr. Lee was elected again, on the nineteenth of August, by the Assembly of Virginia, a delegate to Congress, for the term of one year.

On the twenty-first of August, a letter was received from General Washington, enclosing the proceedings of a court martial on Major General Lee, and also, a letter from Major General Phillips, respecting the convention-army in Canada. It was *Resolved*, "that the said papers, and so much of General Washington's letter as refers to the letter of General Phillips, be referred to a committee of three." Mr. Lee was one of this commit-

* See Journal, p. 398.

tee. On the same day, a letter was received from the council of Pennsylvania, containing a request from the council, and a committee of the House of Assembly, to have a conference with a committee of Congress, on the subject of fortifying the river Delaware. A committee was accordingly appointed, of which, Mr. Lee was chairman. A letter from the Baron De Kalb was received, and on the twenty-second instant, the military subjects contained in it, were referred to a committee. Mr. Lee was chosen chairman of this committee. On the twenty-seventh, a committee of five, "to consider the state of the finances, and report thereon from time to time." Of this very important committee, Mr. Lee was one.

On the fourth of September, it was *Resolved*, "that the committee of arrangement, to which, the letter of the eleventh ultimo, from the council of war of Rhode Island was referred, be discharged. and it be referred to a committee of three, of which, Mr. Lee was chosen one. On the seventh, a letter from Major General Arnold was received, and referred to a committee of five, of which, Mr. Lee was chairman. On the ninth, a letter from the Count D'Estaign, was received and referred to a committee of four, which was directed to prepare an answer. Of this committee Mr. Lee was chairman. On the tenth, a committee of five was appointed to confer with the minister plenipotentiary to France, respecting the future operations of the fleet, under the command of the Count D'Estaign. Mr. Lee was chosen chairman of this committee. On the seventeenth, the report of a committee on the arrangement of the treasury, was reconsidered and referred to a committee of five, of which, Mr. Lee was one.

On the fifth of October, it was *Resolved*, "that a committee of four be appointed to confer with the supreme executive council of the state of Pennsylvania, on the best means of repelling the enemy, should the British commander discover any intention of again attacking Philadelphia." Mr. Lee was one of this committee.

On the thirteenth, he acted on a committee, to which were referred, a letter from the Marquis La Fayette, and one from General Washington, both of which were written on military affairs. On the same day, he was one of a committee to which were referred, a report from the committee on finance, and a proposed amendment. On the following day, he was chairman of a committee, to which a letter from the Count D'Estaign, to the honourable Seur Gerard, and sundry other letters accompanying it, was referred. On the nineteenth instant, a letter from the commissary of purchases, was read and referred to a committee of three, of which Mr. Lee was chairman. On the twenty-sixth, it was *Resolved,* That a committee of three be appointed, to superintend the publication of such matters, as relate to the disputes, petitions, and negotiations to, and with Great Britain, and such notes and explanations thereon, as to them may seem proper. Of this committee, Mr. Lee was chairman.

Mr. Lee's strength again failed him, under the labours which duty and love of country, called him to undergo. On the first of November, he was compelled to ask leave of absence. But, even when his body was confined to his house by the stern restraints of disease, his mind was still active; it still studied the interests of the nation, and watched every movement and device of its external and internal enemies. This unwearied activity of mind, had become a well known characteristic of Mr. Lee. Hence, the reader will find, by referring to the Journal of the 1st of November, '78, that after leave of absence had been given him, it was ordered, "that the memorial of Captain Harper, and the papers relative thereto, be delivered to R. H. Lee." These papers related to the proceedings of one of the courts of admiralty, on a libel against the schooner Liberty, and the property on board of it. These papers had been referred to a committee of three, on the twenty-sixth of August, which had reported. The report was postponed, and now, on the first of November, all the papers

were ordered to be delivered to Mr. Lee, on his return to Virginia. Mr. Lee's mental energy never yielded to the hand of disease, nor failed with the decline of his body. Hence, Dr. Rush, in speaking of the extraordinary activity of Mr. Lee's mind, even when his body was enfeebled, said, "his mind was like a sword, which was too large for its scabbard."

An anecdote may here be related of Mr. Lee, which serves to show the unceasing interest he took, in the public affairs, when in the retirement of private life. When intelligence reached Westmoreland, of the arrival of the French fleet, under the Count De Grasse, off Norfolk, Mr. Lee was at home. He immediately formed the idea of supplying it with fresh provisions, which he knew would be grateful to both seamen and officers, after so long a voyage. He went in person through the county, and procured a subscription of such articles, as each person could most conveniently give, of live cattle, poultry, butter, vegetables, &c. He himself largely contributed. He succeeded in procuring provision sufficient, to load a schooner, which he freighted and sent, with a letter, to the Count.*

* See the Count's reply, Appendix No. 10.

CHAPTER IX.

It was thought to be due to the memory and reputation of Mr. Lee, to give a sketch of his services and labours in the Continental Congress, during the most difficult and gloomy periods of the revolutionary struggle. These have been undervalued in the present age. To enable the reader to estimate his character, he has been introduced with Mr. Lee, into the hall of legislation, and led with him to the business of committees. He has been asked to contemplate him as a statesman, and a man of business, because it seemed meet and just, that a republic, whose foundation he so ably and successfully laboured to lay firmly on the solid basis of liberty, knowledge and virtue; should possess an authentic and connected memorial of the life and character and labours of one of its most useful citizens.

During the sessions of 1774-5-6-7-8, Mr. Lee was at the head, or a member of every military and naval committee. The remark is equally applicable to nearly every committee on finance and foreign affairs. Besides serving on many others, which have been omitted, he was, during the sessions of 1774-5, a member of fourteen committees to draw papers; five about military matters; and nine about miscellaneous affairs. In the session of 1776, he was on two committees to draw papers, fifteen on military and naval concerns, and thirteen on miscellaneous matters: in the session of 1777, he was on two committees to draw papers, twelve on military and naval, and twenty on miscellaneous subjects: in the session of 1778, he was a member of four committees to draw papers, thirteen military and naval, and twenty miscellaneous. During the three last ses-

sions, he had been absent, in consequence of ill health, from one to three months. It is believed that his labours were not confined to those subjects, which had been referred to his consideration, for the author remembers to have heard a gentleman of the highest respectability, repeat a conversation between Dr. Shippen, of Philadelphia, in whose house Mr. Lee lodged, while he was a member of Congress, in which the doctor observed, "that there was a constant procession of members repairing to his chamber, to consult about their reports." He was the author of many of the publications of the Old Congress, from some of the most important of their addresses, down to the commission of their military chief.

A few days after Mr. Lee reached home, he received a letter from General Whipple, a delegate from New Hampshire, and a leading man in that state. It is pleasant, amid war and business, to observe the warm and social feelings of private life. It was, no doubt, grateful to Mr. Lee, to be thus cherished in the esteem and respect of virtuous men, from every part of the country.

"PHILADELPHIA, 8th November, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR—On my arrival here, the fourth instant, I had the pleasure of receiving your favour of the 31st ultimo, at the hand of our mutual friend, Mr. Adams. I esteem myself highly obliged by this token of your remembrance, but should have been much happier to have seen you here.

May I hope that my loss may be made up by frequetly hearing from you, which I flatter myself your retirement will afford you opportunities of gratifying me in.

You may be assured my attention will be much engaged in marine matters, and it will afford me particular satisfaction to co-operate with you in that business when you return here, which it is my sincere wish your business may speedily admit of.

I left Mr. Langdon very well on the twentieth October. He very particularly desired his respects to you. Please

make my most respectful compliments to your good lady, who, I hope, will so far retract her promise, as to give me an opportunity (when peace is happily established) to introduce her to such persons in Portsmouth as will be very happy in having an opportunity of making a visit to that country agreeable to her.

I have taken up my quarters at *Liberty Hall*, where you know there is a set well agreed in political sentiments, and I think I may say with great certainty, that they are as well agreed in sentiments of esteem and respect for you. I anticipate the pleasure of some long winter evening, when, with a social pipe and a friendly glass, we shall call to mind our worthy friend, and heartily join in wishing he may be soon added to our little circle.

I have nothing new at present to give you. Whenever any thing happens that I think will give you pleasure, be assured that it will be a double pleasure to me to communicate it.

I am, dear sir, with the utmost sincerity, most respectfully your's, &c.

WILLIAM WHIPPLE."

Mr. Lee did not remain long at home. He returned to Philadelphia on the twentieth of February, 1779, and as he had formerly been, so he was again, immediately engaged on the committees of Congress. This will be seen by reference to the Journal, from page 71 of the fifth volume, to page 124.

During Mr. Lee's absence, in the months of December and January, Congress had received very important communications from Arthur Lee, Esq. commissioner to the court of Madrid, in which he informed it of the views and disposition of his Catholic Majesty towards the United States. A memorial from the minister of France had been presented to Congress on the ninth of February, and a private audience had been given to him on the fifteenth. The letters of Arthur Lee, Esq. and the memorial of the French minister, had been referred

to a committee, who reported on the twenty-third instant, "That upon consideration of all the matters referred to them, they are of opinion, that his Catholic majesty is disposed to enter into an alliance with the United States of America: that he has manifested this disposition by a decisive declaration lately made to the Court of Great Britain. That in consequence of such declaration, the independence of the United States must be finally acknowledged by Great Britain; and that immediately thereon a negotiation for peace will be set on foot between the powers of France, Great Britain, and these United States, under the mediation of his Catholic Majesty; or that Spain will take part in the war, and his Catholic Majesty will unite his power with the most Christian King, and the United States." This committee also reported instructions which seemed proper to be given to our ministers, in the event of a negotiation for peace between the three powers. It divided the instructions into two heads. "1st. What to insist on as the ultimatum of these states." "2d. What to yield or require on terms of mutual exchange and compensation." The acknowledgment of the independence of the United States was to be a preliminary to all treaty. The next point to be insisted upon was the boundaries of the United States, according to certain limits. The third point was in these words; "That a right of fishing and curing fish, on the banks and coasts of the island of New Foundland, equally with the subjects of France and England, be reserved, acknowledged, and ratified to the subjects of the United States." The fourth was in these words: "That the navigation of the river Mississippi, as low down as the southern boundary of the United States, be acknowledged and ratified absolutely to the subjects of the United States."*

The two last clauses, the reader will perceive, brought into view subjects of vital importance; subjects which in '79, and in our own times, have occupied the atten-

* See the secret Journals, volume second, p. 132, &c.

tion of American politicians, and deeply interested the American people. Mr. Lee, as it will be seen from his votes in Congress, and from his correspondence with his cotemporaries in '79, viewed those subjects with the mind of a statesman, and legislated upon them in the spirit of a firm and enlightened policy. The interest of the east, the future grandeur of the west, had already dawned upon his vision. The interest and prosperity of both were alike the objects of his care.

The report of the committee was referred to a committee of the whole. After several days of debate upon it, the chairman of the committee, F. L. Lee, Esq. reported to the House several resolutions. On the twenty-second of March, the third resolution reported by the committee of the whole was taken up. It was in the following words: "that a common right in these states to fish on the coast, bays and banks of New Foundland, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, coast of Labrador, and straits of Bellisle, be acknowledged, and in case of refusal, that the war be continued unless the circumstances of our allies be such as to render them entirely unable to assist in the prosecution of the war, in which case, as ample privileges in the fisheries be insisted on as can possibly be obtained. that in case Great Britain should not be prevailed on to cede or declare Nova Scotia independent, the privilege of curing fish on the shores and in the harbours of Nova Scotia be required."* In lieu of this clause Mr. G. Morris moved a substitute in the following words: "That an acknowledgment be made by Great Britain, of a common right in these states to fish on the coasts, bays and banks of Nova Scotia, the banks of New Foundland and Gulf of St. Lawrence, the coasts of Labrador and straits of Bellisle, *and a stipulation for the right of curing fish on the shores of Nova Scotia.* Provided always, that the allies of these states shall be in circumstances to support them in carrying on the war for such

* See secret Journal p. 137-8-9 and 140-1.

acknowledgment and *stipulation;* but that in no case, by any treaty of peace, the common right of fishing as above described be given up." This substitute was adopted and being under debate a motion was made by Mr. M. Smith, of Virginia, and seconded by Mr. Burke, of North Carolina, to strike out the words, "*and a stipulation for the right of curing fish on the shores of Nova Scotia,*" and also the words, "and *stipulation*" after the word "acknowledgment." The question, "shall they stand," was taken, and the ayes and nays were required. Mr. Lee was the only one of the Virginia delegation, and the only member of the middle and southern states who voted in the affirmative. The question was carried in the negative, and the words were omitted.

A motion was then made by Mr. Drayton, of South Carolina, seconded by Mr. G. Morris, of New-York, to strike out the words "Provided always, *that the allies of these states shall be in circumstances to support them in carrying on the war for such acknowledgment.*" On the question, shall these words stand? the yeas and nays were required by Mr. Drayton. Mr. Lee was the only member of the Virginia delegation, and, as on the preceding vote, the only member from the middle or southern states, who voted that these words *should not stand.* It was resolved that the words *should stand.* A division was then called for, and on the question to agree to the first part of the resolution as amended, *including the proviso,* being before the House, the yeas and nays were required by Mr. Ellery. Mr. Lee, again alone, of the members of the states just mentioned, voted against the amendment and proviso. The article, as amended, was agreed to; thus a stipulation respecting a right to *cure fish* on the shores of Nova Scotia, was not to be made an essential demand in a treaty of peace; and even the right *to fish* on the coasts, bays, and banks of Nova Scotia, &c. was not to be insisted on, *only in case our allies were in a situation to support us in forcing Great Britain to*

*acknowledge such a right in our citizens.** Such, however, were not the views of Mr. Lee. He considered that the acknowledgment of a right to fish, and a stipulation to cure fish on those shores, were essential to the interests and prosperity of the eastern and northern states, and he would have made both a *sine qua non* of a treaty. Such was the language of his votes just recorded. He is said to have powerfully advocated and enforced the justice and propriety that all the members of the confederacy should stand or fall, not only by the common independence, but by the interest of each one. He relied, too, for the acknowledgment of claims, on which he thought the wealth and greatness of the Union depended, more on the fortitude and valour of his countrymen, than on the ability and disposition of our allies. Hence he voted against the proviso of the article respecting the fisheries, which however was adopted.

On the twenty-fourth of March, Congress resumed the report of the committee of the whole; and the fourth article, as reported by it, was adopted. It was in these words: "That the navigation of the river Mississippi be acknowledged and ratified absolutely to these states." The reader will recollect that the navigation of this river, *only as low down* as the southern boundary of the United States, was made a demand by the select committee which reported on the twenty-third of February. While this article was under debate in the committee of the whole, Mr. Lee had enforced the policy of demanding and securing a free and entire navigation of that noble river. He seemed to have foreseen the growth of the western territory in population, and to have formed a just estimate of the importance of such a right to their future prosperity. He as earnestly and as steadfastly laboured to secure the interests of the west, as he had done to establish those of the north and east. For these he thought the southern states should struggle to the last, inasmuch as all had fought together for independence.

* See Jour. p. 140—5.

When the 4th article was under consideration, on the twenty-fourth instant, a motion was made by Mr. Burke, and seconded by Mr. Drayton, to add these words: "*Provided*, that the allies of the United States, shall declare themselves in circumstances to afford effectual assistance for carrying on the war, until such acknowledgment and ratification shall be obtained. On the question to agree to this amendment, the yeas and nays were required by Mr. Lee. Upon the question, Mr. Lee voted in the negative. He voted with a majority of his colleagues. Connecticut, Maryland, and South Carolina, were divided; while North Carolina and Georgia, *voted for the amendment.* New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia, rejected the amendment. The question then recurred, to agree to the article as reported by the committee of the whole—and the yeas and nays were required by Mr. Lee. *He voted in the affirmative, and against the majority of his colleagues.* It redounds to its honour, that the *only state* which was willing to make the navigation of the Mississippi absolutely a *sine qua non* to treaty, was Pennsylvania The 4th article was, therefore, rejected. Only eight members, among whom was Mr. Lee, voting in the affirmative on the main queston; viz. to agree to the 4th article, as reported by the committee of the whole.

On the same day on which the 4th article was rejected, Mr. Gerry moved, that the 3d article be reconsidered. The article was read as amended, and agreed to on the twenty-second. It was in these words, "That an acknowledgment be made by Great Britain, of a common right in these states, to fish on the coasts, bays, and banks of Nova Scotia, the Banks of Newfoundland, and Gulf of St. Lawrence, the coasts of Labrador, and Straits of Bellisle; *Provided* always, the allies of these states be in circumstances to support them in carrying on the war, for such acknowledgment, but that in no case, by any treaty of peace, the common right of fishing as above described, be given up." A motion was

made by Mr. Burke to strike out the words, between the words "to fish," and "provided," and in lieu thereof, to insert "on all and singular, the fishing banks to the eastward of the Island of Cape Breton, and of Nova Scotia, which by the treaties of Utrecht and Paris, were ceded to the king of Great Britain, to the exclusion of the subjects of France." A motion was made by Mr. Lee, and seconded by Mr. Burke, that the following words be received as a substitute for the whole of the 3d article, as it had been amended and adopted on the twenty-second instant, "That the right of fishing on the coasts and banks of North America, be reserved to the United States, as fully as they enjoyed the same when they were subject to the king of Great Britain, excepting always, what shall have been excepted by the treaty of Paris, between France and the United States; the whole to be explained by the treaties of Utrecht and Paris, with Great Britain, and of Paris, with the United States of North America." The question "shall this be received as a substitute," was put, and the yeas and nays were required by Mr. Gerry. The question was decided in the affirmative, and the substitute was adopted.

The following letters from Mr. Lee, were written, soon after the secret sittings of Congress, on the subjects just presented to the reader, while he was detained by ill health, at home. He had been compelled to leave Congress on the twenty-fourth of May. They will serve still further, to show his opinions on the subject of the fisheries, and the navigation of the Mississippi. He "could not think, they would be considered by posterity, friends to their country," who were willing to treat with Great Britain, without insisting firmly upon the acquisition of these rights, and having them placed on the same permanent foundations, on which stood the independence and sovereignty of the United States.

"CHANTILLY, August 7th, 1779.

My dear Sir—I had devoted this day, before the going out of the post, to have written to you a long let-

ter; but the great increase of my cold, has compelled me to a third bleeding, and has indisposed me so much that I shall be obliged to abridge this letter a good deal. I cannot fail to thank you for your favour of the twenty-fourth ultimo, which came to hand on the fourth instant. You will please observe, in my last letter, I foretell, that the party would not agree to publish Dr. Lee's vindication.* I know perfectly well, the principles on which these people act, so that, on most points, I would venture ten to one, on saying with certainty, how the set will vote. I am clearly of opinion, that if *Mr.* "*Clearly-out-of-order*," remains much longer in Congress, the United States will have cause to rue it bitterly. I am sure, that I have heard more talk about order, and seen less attention to it, in one week in that Assembly, since he became a member, than in four years preceding his coming in. You suppose I will get the vindication from the fountain; I believe so too, sir, were it not for the vice . . . . . which is disseminated with the partners, in many parts of Virginia, and of France. A large packet came lately to me, robbed of its written papers, which, I can have no doubt, were in it; it was opened at one end, and directed in my brother's handwriting. Every delegate has a right to a copy; and can there be any impropriety (since the paper came directed to me) in a delegate furnishing me with a copy? As the public will, most inevitably, in time, be made acquainted with the proceedings of Congress in this affair, I wish

* This, and the following remarks, refer to Mr. A. Lee's vindication against the aspersions of Silas Deane, who had been a joint commissioner at the court of France, with Messrs. Franklin and A. Lee. Mr. Lee had detected him in committing frauds and peculations upon the United States. As Mr. Lee had foretold, so it happened: Deane fled to England, when ordered to settle his accounts. Mr. Lee vindicated himself so clearly against all his charges, that he was elected a delegate to Congress, by the legislature of his native state, subsequently to his publication in reply to Deane. He was, by that body, also, appointed a commissioner of the board of treasury, and a commissioner, to visit, and treat with, all the tribes of Indians on our western frontiers.

most earnestly, for the honour of many gentlemen now there, that the journal may distinguish properly. To this end, when "order clearly" obstructs not, cannot a motion for publishing be made, and the ayes and nays be taken on it? The same on the question of making Deane give security for settling full and fair accounts. And the same indeed, on all questions relating to this man. You alarm me exceedingly, when you say "I do not at this instant see a man, &c.;" can it be, that the late commissioner can escape with applause! I would not for a thousand worlds have my name to such a vote. Infamy will certainly attend it to the latest posterity. I will pledge my life on this.

I take Captain Duarte, of the Portuguese Snow, to be the captain and vessel carried to Boston by the privateer belonging to R. Morris and Carter Braxton. If so, and our Assembly are to determine any thing concerning it, it will be essentially necessary, that all the papers relative to the case, be sent to that body properly authenticated, and amongst others, Braxton's instructions to the captain of the privateer when he sailed on his cruise: I think this paper is among the Congress files. I shall thank you sir, for an authenticated copy of these instructions, as well as the resolve you allude to in your favour of the twenty-seventh. I am clearly of opinion with you, that if this affair is not properly adjusted in America, the injury to our cause in Europe, will be great; and, I believe, in my conscience, that some people, who hold their heads high in America, wish for this consequence.

If you (as I hope you do) still determine to honour Chantilly with your company as you travel to the south, I pray you, dear sir, to let me know two posts before you leave Philadelphia, that I may not be from home, for I should be extremely concerned were I to be absent on an event I wish so much should take place. I wish we may be so fortunate as to hear that the enemy have been compelled to abandon Georgia. If we meet with success in that quarter, surely our enemy will be compelled

to equitable terms of peace next winter. But I will never call the loss of the fisheries, and the navigation of the Mississippi, equitable. And I am sure posterity will execrate those who do. I am not well, and must conclude. With my best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, my dear sir, your most affectionate friend, and obliged humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To the Hon. HENRY LAURENS."

"CHANTILLY, October 7th, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR—I congratulate you most sincerely on your safe arrival, and your return to your family and country. I hope you found the former in good health; the latter I am very sure will at all times be benefited by the assistance of so able a citizen, and the more so especially at this time, when the most important of all sublunary things is under consideration, the establishment of a government. Independently of the general principle of philanthropy, I feel myself interested in the establishment of a wise and free republican government in Massachusetts, where yet I hope to finish the remainder of my days. The hasty, unpersevering, aristocratic genius of the south suits not my disposition, and is inconsistent with my views of what must constitute social happiness and security.

It is not long since I received your favour of February 13th, from Paris. So far as immediate personal ease and happiness are the objects, it is beyond a doubt that the life of a private citizen is more desirable than any public character whatever, and especially such as carry us from home. But, my friend, we must consider that individual happiness flows from the general felicity; and the security of the whole is the safety of particulars. What must become of the American cause and character, if her councils at home and abroad are to be filled and conducted by half *tories*, ambitious, avaricious and wicked men? These considerations induce me to wish

that you would not give up the thoughts of public service; until our affairs are better settled. I wish with all my heart that the Chevalier De La Luzerne and Mr. De Marbois had originally come here. I do assure you, it would greatly have benefited the cause of the alliance and the United States. Such scenes of wicked intrigue as I never expected to take place in America, until the maturity of time and luxury with its consequent train of vices, had ripened us for destruction! You will no doubt be fully informed by others concerning the proceedings of a faction dangerous to our country, and very disgraceful also. October 13th, I had written thus far and stopped, having no opportunity of immediate conveyance, when my friends from Philadelphia, informed me of the crowning work of more than a year's intrigue, that malice was at last glutted to satiety. It seems the party were under the necessity of employing a proper man. I am well pleased to see even the wicked compelled to do right. I heartily wish you success in your negotiation, and that whilst you secure one valuable point for us, (the fisheries,) you will not the less exert your endeavours for another very essential object, the free navigation of the Mississippi, provided guilty Britain should remain in possession of the Floridas. I totally despair of this navigation from any other advocation. Before this reaches Boston you will have heard of the arrival of the Count D'Estaign on our coasts. Should fortune favour us with this aid, we may hope to remove our unprincipled enemies from New York and Rhode Island. If, to this, we could add Nova Scotia, we might be pretty indifferent about the future movements of Great Britain.

I shall be happy at all times to hear from you, and will in return furnish you with such intelligence as this part of the world produces.

With singular esteem and affection,
I am, dear sir, most sincerely yours,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

To the Hon. JOHN ADAMS."

There are some opinions in the preceding letter, which, may perhaps, surprise the reader, when he recollects that Mr. Lee was a native of a southern state; at the time when this letter was written, the manners and customs of the wealthy inhabitants of the south, still exhibited in some degree, the pomp and luxury, which characterized them before the revolution. The distinctions in society were still marked. The unequal distribution of property tended to keep alive the pride of family, and a distance of manner towards the poorer part of the people. But causes, which it is unnecessary here to trace, have worked almost an entire change in these respects, and now plainness of manners, and a spirit of equality and freedom, distinguish the inhabitants of Virginia and of her sister states of the south, as republican communities. The legislature of Virginia, about the period of Mr. Lee's letter to Mr. Adams, had manifested too great a disposition, to rely on mere temporary expedients in the important internal concerns of the state; and an indisposition to provide by prompt, judicious and solid regulations, for its present security, and future prosperity. Mr. Lee, however, was well known to have been strongly attached to his native state, and to have enthusiastically admired many features of southern character.

While Mr. Lee was at home in the summer of '79, an incident occurred, which, as it tends to show the disinterested love of country, that prevailed among the American yeomanry during the revolution, cannot fail to be interesting.

The reader knows that in the year 1779, a treaty of alliance had been formed between France and the United States; and, that a fleet under the command of the Count D'Estaign, had arrived on the coast. In the early part of August, of that year, a French ship of war bearing despatches to Congress, and ordered to put in at Norfolk, in Virginia, was chased by some British ships, as far up the Potomac, as the county of Westmoreland. The name and character of Mr. Lee, were

previously known to the commander of the ship, or learned perhaps, from intercourse with the shore. So it was, that all the papers of importance were delivered to him by the commander, who, accompanied by the principal officers of the ship, waited on Mr. Lee. Upon a conference with them, he obtained sufficient information respecting the despatches, to perceive their great interest, and the propriety of as early a conveyance of them as possible to Congress. The danger of travelling directly towards Philadelphia, especially without some very apparent, or easily explained motive, was great, both along the roads in the interior of the states through which the traveller must pass, and along the roads on the coasts. The enemy's ships had possession of the Chesapeake Bay, and often came up the Potomac river as high as Alexandria.

Mr. Lee continuing too feeble to return to Philadelphia, was obliged to look for some person, whose courage and fidelity could be relied on, and whose intelligence and ingenuity would enable him to evade inquiries, and to take advantage of every means and opportunity of a safe and speedy arrival in Philadelphia. He was for some time in considerable difficulty, in fixing on a person in every point fitted for the trip. He, at first, endeavoured to find such a person among men of mature age. But, although he could find many whose love and fidelity to their country could be trusted, yet they were in other respects, unqualified for the errand. He at length, recollected a young man* of his neighbourhood, about eighteen or nineteen years of age, whose adventurous spirit and intelligence, fitted him for any enterprise. The moment this youth occurred to his mind, he sent for him, and having by general remarks and inquiries, ascertained that he would undertake any thing for his country, he revealed to him the real service he required of him. The promptitude and

* His name was Bennet, who lived and died respected in Leesburg, Virginia.

pleasure which the youth evinced at the idea of serving his country, convinced Mr. Lee, that he had met with one in every respect suited to the occasion. Having instructed him to proceed with all possible despatch and secrecy to Philadelphia, and deliver the papers to the president of Congress alone, and having planned with him the route and manner of his journey, he sewed the papers in different parts of his dress, so as to render it imperceptible, that he had any thing about him.

The young man having always lived on the water-courses, was very skilful in the management of small vessels. He accordingly provided himself with a small boat, and in the dimness of twilight, without returning to his home, proceeded to the river, accompanied by Mr. Lee; and after receiving much encouragement and many warm commendations from him, he pushed off, alone. In this boat he passed a schooner and two tenders of the enemy, during the night, and as soon as the day dawned, he came ashore, and travelled on foot, avoiding as much as possible the public roads. He frequently lay in the woods, during the day, suffering severely from hunger and thirst, and travelled during the night. Having been a long time without any thing to eat, and finding himself near a small town at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, he determined about sunset to go into it and procure refreshment, at some obscure inn. Having found one in which he thought he might safely stop for a short time, he went in. While he was sitting in a room, adjoining a garden, four or five British seamen and marines came into the porch of the tavern, and putting down their guns, called for rum. After drinking some of it, two of them came into the room in which he was sitting, and began to question him, "whether he belonged to king George, or to the rebels?" He answered them in a collected and careless manner, and they, at length, returned to their comrades. As soon as they had left the room, he leaped from the window, and crossing the garden, without being observed, regained the road leading into the country, and travelled, as fast as

he could, during the night. He, at last, arrived safely in Philadelphia, just after Congress had assembled. Having been directed to the house in which it met, he found it sitting with closed doors. He assured the door-keeper, with much earnestness, that he had some business of great importance with the president, to whom alone he was instructed to communicate what it was. The door-keeper being struck with his manner, went in, and after some minutes, the president came out. The young man informed him of the circumstances under which he had been sent by Colonel Lee, and of his instruction to deliver the papers to the president of Congress. The president, after reading Mr. Lee's letter, and receiving all the papers mentioned in it, had him provided with comfortable lodgings. After the house adjourned, the president waited on him, and presented to him the thanks of Congress, and expressed a desire that he would accept a reward. He, however, declined all offers of the kind, requesting only money enough to enable him to return to Virginia. The following letter from Mr. Lovell, a member of Congress, to Mr. Lee, which is copied from the manuscript of Mr. Lovell, will confirm the above related anecdote. The author has more than once heard it from the person himself, whose veracity no one ever doubted.

"31st August, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the twenty-second came yesterday to hand. Mr. Bennet parted from me on Saturday, *and will probably get home in less time than he came.*

I will attend, all in my power, to the subjects you have written about; but I am verily exceeding sick, confined to my chamber and my bed alternately. I have, in vain, dabbled with rhubarb; I go upon tartar-emetic to day. I was in bed yesterday, when I prepared a scrap for Dunlap's paper. I was unwilling to let a part of a day go over, without some continuance of the vouchers of Deane's infamy. Mr. John Adams on hearing of De

Vergennes and Mr. Arthur Lee, has sent me copies of his own correspondence with that minister, on the subject of Deane's publication; in the course of which he gives such testimony from personal knowledge, in regard to Arthur Lee, and his brothers, Richard and Francis, as cannot fail to destroy any evil impression made by Deane's publication; *and which must do honour to the manly, ingenuous spirit of the writer.* Whenever I dare, I will copy them. I must first translate the French, which is the full my present state of health will permit. This morning brings what I now send. I have not examined them. At the same time the Parliamentary Registers were sent. I thought it transgression enough to frank the present. I will send the others by the first opportunity.

Your's affectionately,
JAMES LOVELL."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Lee was re-elected, in the Spring of the year 1780, a delegate from the county of Westmoreland, to the General Assembly of Virginia. He did not resume his seat in Congress, during this year, or during the two following years. The affairs of his native state required his services.

The enemy now turned his operations against the southern states, more particularly than he had yet done. The war upon the coasts of Virginia, was of a predatory kind, rather than a general and regular attack. The inhabitants living on the large rivers, were kept in a state of continual alarm and danger, by small fleets, from which the enemy landed troops, and pillaged the country. The county of Westmoreland was much exposed to these distressing incursions. Mr. Lee was, therefore, called upon by the state government, to take upon himself the discharge of the duties of his office of lieutenant of the county, in which character he had the command of all the militia of it. He accordingly, as promptly took upon him actual military duty, as he had undertaken the duties of a Senator. In his military capacity, he evinced his characteristic intelligence, judgment, and activity. He immediately called out the militia, and put it into a state of order and preparation. He had been, when a young man, fond of military life, and had made himself scientifically, and practically, acquainted with its duties. He had studied military science with great care and labour, with a view to render himself serviceable in the field, if the exigencies and wish of this country required him to act there. He now found it of great utility to him, in arranging and disciplining the militia. He appointed

stated days, on which, at different places in the county, the several divisions should be exercised. He was always present, at these times and places, and personally attended to the exercising of the men. He very soon established such discipline amongst the militia of his county, and inspired them with such spirit, that they were ready, at a moment's warning, to meet any danger, or to undergo any hardship. He selected places of defence, and situations for his camps, with so much judgment, that the county of Westmoreland was seldom visited by the enemy. Captain Graves, who commanded one or two schooners, and a number of tenders, had the entire possession of the river Potomac, and ravaged the counties upon its shores. He once observed, to a person whom he had taken prisoner from one of the lower counties of Virginia, "I never put my foot upon Westmoreland, that the militia are not upon me directly."

On one occasion, information was given to Mr. Lee, that one of the enemy's tenders had been driven in, and stranded, by a violent storm. He had reason to expect, that there would be, on board of it, arms and ammunition, of which he was in much want. He determined upon making an effort to take possession of it. He received intelligence that Graves' fleet had appeared in sight, and was making towards the point where the tender was lying. He immediately ordered out two small companies of militia, one of which, was armed with rifles. At the head of these, he marched to the river. On his arrival, he perceived that the enemy were preparing to regain their vessel, for two or three tenders (or barges) well manned, soon stood in for the shore. Mr. Lee placed his riflemen on the bank, directing them to conceal themselves behind the bushes and fences, and to reserve their fire until he should give them further orders. He then placed the other company on the beach, and took his station at their head. As the tenders approached, the enemy fired their long guns, the balls of which, generally struck in the bank, over the heads of the men. When they were near enough to be reached by small

arms, he directed his men to fire. He then returned to those whom he had stationed on the bank, and having ordered them to commence their fire, he hastened down to the beach; he had the mortification to find his men flying, and the enemy landing. They fired upon him, and his horse threw him within one hundred yards of them. He coolly re-mounted his horse, amidst their shot. Providence preserved him, unhurt. The enemy succeeded, at last, in towing off their tender, but did not attempt to ascend the bank.

Mr. Lee continued, during the year '81, with industry and vigilance, to protect his native county from the depredations of the enemy. He did not confine his exertions to the county of Westmoreland, but actively assisted in the defence of the whole of that section of the state, called "the Northern Neck." Some of the letters of General Weedon, (who commanded whatever regular army could be raised in Virginia) to be found amongst the Virginia correspondence accompanying this memoir, will give the reader an idea of the activity, judgment, and services of Mr. Lee, in his military capacity.

General Green, when on his way to take the command of the southern army, was introduced to Mr. Lee, by a letter from Dr. Shippen. Between General Green and Mr. Lee, there was a constant correspondence carried on, during the southern campaign. It is a matter of regret, that the letters of the former have all been lost, together with a great number of other valuable papers.

Mr. Lee attended the sittings of the General Assembly of Virginia, in the years '81 and '82, and took an active part in its business.

During these sessions, two subjects of great importance to the state, were frequently agitated. These were, the propriety and expediency of making depreciated paper money a tender for debts, which had been created, on the credit and faith of specie payment: and of impeding, and indeed, of confiscating debts due by citizens of the state, to British merchants, that had been contracted upon fair and mutual dealings before

the war. These subjects deeply interested the people; and it may well be imagined, that they would be divided in opinion respecting them. The politicians of the state, held different opinions, and discussed them with great warmth, both in and out of the Assembly. Indeed, the whole state was heated and agitated.

On the questions growing out of these subjects, in the legislature, Mr. Lee took a leading and animated part. He declared, that no questions which he had been called to consider, had created a deeper interest in his breast, and had raised so much concern for the honour and interests of his fellow citizens. His friend, Patrick Henry, and himself, were on opposite sides in every debate; Mr. Henry earnestly advising the adoption of these measures, and Mr. Lee as earnestly opposing them. He objected to them both, because. he said, he considered at least, such measures would be gross violations of honesty and good faith between men. He declared, that under no extremity or state necessity, would he consent to a legislative violation of these principles. He declared, that it would have been better to have remained "the honest slaves of Great Britain, than to become dishonest freemen." He eloquently urged, that no republic could exist, without virtue and honesty in the people, and warned his hearers of the danger of enacting laws, which should encourage the citizens to make light of the faith of contracts. On the subject of the tender-law, (which allowed a man to pay a debt of one hundred dollars, with paper money not worth one dollar) he pathetically pictured the ruin of the widow and orphan, whose whole fortune, perhaps, consisted in loans, which under this law, might be repaid "in rags and paper."

He also vehemently opposed the proposition to confiscate British debts, and that to impede the recovery of them. He declared, that the first proposition, under the circumstances of our case, would violate all principles of honesty and national honour. To the argument, that in the case of a revolution, necessity justified the

measure, he replied, that it would be a direct encouragement to the debtors in a community, to create revolutions; and, that it would be a matter of no consideration with them, that their debts were due to *foreign* creditors. The war was over; and the people ought, by industry, now that they were freemen, honestly to pay their debts. This would inculcate virtuous principles, which alone could secure their freedom.

Mr. Lee, very early after the peace, turned his attention to the propriety and to the consideration of the most expedient mode of funding the public debt of the state, and of providing as efficiently as possible for the support of public credit. To these concerns he gave profound and serious consideration, both in respect to his native state and to the confederation. He, with Mr. Henry, were advocates of a proposition to make every man contribute something to the support of the Christian religion, as the only sure basis of private and public morality.* Both these gentlemen were utterly opposed, however, to any established state religion. On the contrary, they were strenuous advocates of an entire freedom of religious belief. Mr. Lee's opinions on these and various other important and interesting political subjects, may be more fully and agreeably learned, from a perusal of his correspondence in the years 1784-5, than from any detailed statement which his biographer could make.

Mr. Lee was re-elected to the Virginia Assembly, in the spring of '83, and served throughout its session of that year.

During the winter of '83, intelligence reached America that provisional articles of peace had been signed at Paris, between our commissioners and those of Great Britain, in which the sovereignty and independence of the United States were acknowledged, and the right of the fisheries, and the free and entire navigation of the

* This is done in many of the eastern states, whose constitutions are as republican, or democratic, as those of any of the southern states; and where the most unfettered freedom of religious opinion exists.

Mississippi were ceded, to the full extent to which Mr. Lee had so strenuously advocated a claim, in the secret session of '79. To bring, in some degree, to the view of the reader, the estimation in which Mr. Lee's services were held by the patriots of those days, a letter from General Whipple is here inserted. The reader will find much evidence to the same effect, in the body of correspondence.

"PORTSMOUTH, (N. H.) 17th April, 1783.

My dear Sir—I cannot omit an opportunity that offers by a vessel bound to Virginia, to congratulate you on the happy event which, for many years, has been the great object of your labours and anxious cares. The very unequivocal part you, my dear friend, have taken, in this great revolution, must furnish your hours of retirement with the most pleasing reflections. Though the terms may not be, in all respects, exactly conformable to our wishes, they are, perhaps, equal to what we had a right to expect, all things considered.

My happiness is greatly increased by this joyous event, as it opens a prospect of seeing you here. I already anticipate the pleasure of recapitulating with you those private as well as public consultations, in which you took so eminent a part, and which have produced such happy effects.

This country, my dear sir, is very particularly obliged for your exertions to secure the most valuable branch of her trade, the fisheries. As a small token of my sense of the obligation, I must beg your acceptance of a quintal of fish, which, I think is of the best quality.

With very particular attachment, and the greatest respect, I am, my dear sir, your most affectionate friend and humble servant,

Wm. Whipple.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee."

In the spring of '84, Mr. Lee was again elected a member of the General Assembly, by the people of West-

moreland, who still clung to their long tried friend and servant with unabated confidence and attachment. He appeared in his seat in that body, and was by it again chosen a deputy to Congress.

Peace being established, Mr. Lee's services were no longer required in his native state. He therefore accepted the honour again conferred upon him, and took his seat in Congress on the first of November, 1784. On the thirtieth of that month, the chair of the presidency being vacant, he was elected president of Congress, the most honourable and important station under the American confederation. The Congress was in session the whole year 1785. Mr. Lee's health having been much improved, by the exercise of a more active life, during the last two or three years he continued in Congress, during the whole of that year, and with his wonted vigour and zeal, discharged the duties of his office. These duties were not confined to the sittings of the House, but concerned every department of the public business. Correspondence with all foreign ministers was conducted by the president of Congress. The author finds among the manuscripts of Mr. Lee, several diplomatic notes and other communications, between Mr. Lee and foreign ministers, which are fine specimens of the dignified diplomacy of the pristine age of the republic.

At the expiration of the presidential year, Mr. Lee returned to Virginia, from whence he had been absent twelve months. Upon his retirement from the chair of the president, it was *Resolved*, "that the thanks of Congress be presented to his excellency, Richard Henry Lee, for his able and faithful discharge of the duties of president, while acting in that important station."*

Mr. Lee was re-elected a member of the Virginia Assembly in the spring of '86, and served in its session. In the spring of the year '87, he was again elected to that Assembly, and while a member of it, was elected a deputy to Congress, of which body, he once more be-

* See Journals, November 4, 1785.

came an able and conspicuous member. He was one of the committe which penned and reported the famous "Ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States, north west of the river Ohio." By the fourth article of this instrument, "slavery and involuntary servitude, except in the punishment of crimes," is prohibited. The states formed under its provisions, are flourishing with a vigour and luxuriance, unexampled in any age or country.

Mr. Lee was present in Congress, from the ninth of July, '87, until the end of that year.

The delegates from the several states who had been appointed to amend the articles of the confederation, met early in the month of September of the year '87. Mr. Lee joined in the vote by which Congress submitted the plan of a new federal constitution to conventions of the people of the states. Mr. Lee was not a member of the convention in Virginia which discussed and finally adopted the present federal constitution. He was, however, a strenuous opponent of its adoption as it was reported to Congress by the convention at Philadelphia. He, as well as many of the ablest patriots of that day, thought they saw in it a consolidation of the political powers of the people of the United States, which would effectually destroy the independence of the state governments. The objections of Mr. Lee to the constitution, and his arguments in support of them, may be seen by the reader in eloquent and powerful detail, in his letters in the body of correspondence written during the years 1787, and 1788. The correspondence then maintained between the venerable S. Adams and Mr. Lee, is well worthy of the considerate perusal of every American statesman. It will command his profound attention, and will repay the lively interest which every citizen is disposed to take in the political writings of such distinguished statesmen, who lived in those times in which the present form of government was devised and adopted.

Although Mr. Lee opposed the adoption of the new

constitution as it was originally proposed, yet, he discountenanced by his example and advice all warmth and violence. He earnestly advised his friends and his fellow citizens, to consider and discuss its principles and provisions with candour, coolness and temper. If the reason and judgment of the people should induce a majority to adopt it, he strongly dissuaded the minority from all intemperance of opposition, and advised them to resort to the method only provided by the constitution for its amendment. Entertaining the opinion that its tendency to consolidation was fatally strong, he fondly indulged the hope that such amendments would be recommended by the first Congress, as would in a great degree, if not entirely, counteract the danger which he so much dreaded. It is well known how entirely Mr. Henry coincided with him in his views on this most important subject. Hence, when the Assembly of Virginia was about to proceed to the election of senators from this state to the Senate of the United States, Mr. Henry nominated Mr. Lee and Mr. Grayson for this honour, in opposition to two other gentlemen, one of whom was Mr. Madison, the distinguished advocate of the constitution. Mr. Lee and Mr. Grayson were elected the first senators from Virginia, under the present general government.

Mr. Lee, very soon after he took his seat in the Senate of the United States, moved several amendments, the object of which was to provide effectual checks upon the powers of the general government, and strong and distinct guards to the sovereignty of the United States. The author has understood, that Mr. Lee first moved the tenth amendment, at present a part of the federal constitution. Had it been adopted as he moved it in the Senate, it would have formed a much more powerful guard to "state rights" than it now does. He proposed it in these words: "The powers not delegated by the constitution to the United States, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively." The reader will perceive the difference

between the proposed, and the adopted amendment. The author has heard that Mr. Ellsworth of Massachusetts, moved to add the words, "or to the people," which were adopted.

Mr. Lee served two sessions in the Senate, and maintained his reputation, as a statesman and an orator, unimpaired. Having done all in his power to lessen what he thought the dangers to be apprehended from the extensive powers delegated to the federal government, and being in a degree satisfied by the amendment to the constitution which he lived to see adopted, he became, and continued to the end of his life, a warm supporter of the administration of Washington. He approved of the course pursued by him in the case of Genet, and applauded his declaration of neutrality. Soon after the declaration was proclaimed, there was a meeting of several of the inhabitants of Fredericksburg, in Virginia, in which resolutions condemning this measure, and inimical in their tenour to Washington, were passed. Mr. Lee was, at the time he heard of these resolutions, at the residence of one of his sons, which was not far distant from Mount Vernon. He immediately wrote a long and friendly letter to General Washington, in which he denounced his enemies, and assured him of his approbation and support. To this letter, the last he ever wrote on political affairs, the father of his country returned a most affectionate reply. The letter of General Washington, and a copy of the letter of Mr. Lee, were for many years in the possession of his son. The author regrets their loss. They were highly valuable and interesting.

The enfeebled state of Mr. Lee's health forced him to resign his seat in the Senate of the United States, in the year 1792. The following vote of thanks to him, was moved in the Senate of Virginia, and was unanimously agreed to. It was, with equal unanimity, concurred in by the House of Delegates.

"OCTOBER 22d, 1792.
In Senate.

Resolved unanimously, That the speaker be desired to convey to Richard Henry Lee, Esq. the respects of the Senate; that they sincerely sympathize with him in those infirmities which have deprived their country of his valuable services; and that they ardently wish he may, in his retirement, with uninterrupted happiness, close the evening of a life, in which he hath so conspicuously shone forth as a statesman and a patriot; that while mindful of his many exertions to promote the public interests, *they are particularly thankful for his conduct, as a member of the Legislature of the United States.*"

The following notes are the replies made by Mr. Lee to the Senate and House of Delegates.

"CHANTILLY, 5th November, 1792.

SIR—I have been duly honoured with the letter (and its enclosure) that you were pleased to write to me on the eighteenth October. I pray you, sir, to assure the honourable House of Delegates, that I feel the deepest sense of gratitude and obligation for the good opinion that they are pleased to entertain of my services, and for the condescending and obliging wish that they express for the future prospects of my life. I have ever thought, that the best reward for public service, is the approbation of our country; and surely examples like this are wisely fitted to encourage patriotic zeal, and to support the servants of the public, through the perplexing intricacies of political life. To you, sir, my thanks are particularly due, for the very polite and affectionate manner in which you have been so good as to convey to me the sense of the House.

I have the honour to be, with all possible respect, sir, your most obliged and most obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Honourable the Speaker of the
House of Delegates."

" CHANTILLY, 5th November, 1792.

SIR—I have received the letter you did me the honour to write to me, on the twenty-third of October, with the resolve enclosed therein. Be so good, sir, as to present my duty to the Senate, and assure that honourable body that I feel, as I ought to do, the highest sense of obligation, for the honour conferred upon me, by the manner in which they have been pleased to express their sense of my services, and for the obliging wish, they have expressed, for the future happiness of my life. I wish it may be the good fortune of those who follow me, to serve masters willing to crown their labours, by bestowing upon them a reward so respectable as I have been favoured with.

I thank you, sir, for the kind manner of conveying to me the sense of the Senate; and I remain, with the highest respect, sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Honourable the Speaker of the Senate."

Mr. Lee now finally retired from all public employments.

Having thus presented to view the public life and character of Mr. Lee, it remains for his biographer to relate such traits of his private life as may show, that he was justly entitled to that esteem and affection of his fellow citizens, of his family and friends, which accompanied him to his latest hour.

His early days were spent in a truly Spartan style. His mother, who was one of the high-toned aristocracy of the day, confined all her care and attention to her daughters and her eldest son, who was to be the head of the family, and gave up her younger sons, when boys, to be fed, in a great measure, by their own enterprise and exertions, without which, they might often have wanted the necessaries of life. To this circumstance may be attributed, in a great measure, that vigour of mind and body which they afterwards enjoyed.

Having finished his academical course of studies at Wakefield, in England, Mr. Lee travelled through that country, visited its great metropolis, and brought with him, to his native home, that refinement of manners which graced both the forum and the fireside.

Soon after his first marriage, (to gratify the wishes of his eldest brother, who was so fond of him that he would not consent that he should live far from him,) he was induced to reside in the county of Westmoreland; the situation was unhealthy, and the soil not rich; but being on a river, it possessed some compensating advantages. Here, by that active, intelligent, and persevering industry, for which he was so much distinguished, he was enabled to live in a style of comfort and independence equal to that of his more wealthy friends.*

His house was always filled with guests, whom the suavity of his manners, his frank and generous hospitality, his strong and instructive conversation, at once invited and pleased. To the neighbouring poor he was a friend, an instructor, their physician, and the arbiter of their differences. He imported, annually, a quantity of the best medicines, from the "Apothecary's Hall," in London, when he could do so, for their use; and administered it to them, with kindness and effect. It was, indeed, pleasing to witness, the affection and veneration with which they always approached him. A strong proof of the regard his neighbours and fellow citizens bore him, was shown by the fact, that he never lost an election in his native county. Hence he, at all times, triumphed with ease over every effort of calumny and envy to injure him; for, unfortunately for man, the purest virtue, and the greatest merit, never escape the attacks of bad men, governed by such passions. It may be remarked, too,

* He was very fond of the society of learned medical gentlemen, and his intercourse and correspondence with them, were not confined to his own country. Dr. Fothergill and others were his correspondents. See his letter, in the body of correspondence, to Dr. Blane, of England, thanking him for the present of his "Treatise on the Diseases of Seamen."

that he enjoyed, throughout a period of more than thirty years, the confidence and honours of his state.

But it was in the domestic circle, that the evenness and amiableness of his temper, his good sense, and industry, were most conspicuous. At an early period of their marriage, he lost his wife, who left him four young and infant children. The busy scenes of public life, in which he was then engaged, and the young and helpless state of his children, soon forced him to think of a second marriage. He succeeded in securing a partner for his after life, every way worthy of him. Although his patrimony was not great, and his public engagements were numerous, constant, and onerous, yet such were the ardent exertions of his ever-active mind, that he found means to send his two oldest sons to England, and to France, for their education, and supported his children who remained at home, with such equal and impartial fondness, as drew them together, by those strong cords of mutual affection, which never permitted them to feel the difference of parentage.

Although one of the kindest and fondest of parents, doing every thing to please and divert his children, yet he was ever rigid in exacting their performance of moral duties; and such was the power of his rebuke, and the influence of his parental authority and affection, that they never stood in need of bodily correction, to be made to feel their errors, and avoid them.*

The great esteem and affection with which he was

* The author has heard an anecdote related by a son of Mr. Lee, which will illustrate his character in this respect. He had entrusted one of his sons with a key, to give to a servant something that was wanted; he happened to be passing by the door of the room to which he had sent his son, and saw the servant coming out of it, with that, which he had not desired his son to let him have. He called his son to him, and in a mild, but serious manner, told him of the impropriety, on any occasion, of breaking the trust reposed in him; and impressed upon him, the consequences which would follow, from allowing himself to do so, upon any account. The boy went into the house crying, and when asked by his mother, "what was the matter," he replied, "my father has been talking to me *about consequences*."

regarded by his brothers, were shown by two of them, who died, without children, bequeathing to his sons, their large estates, almost entire.

A long and laborious course of public life, had gradually enfeebled a vigorous constitution; and the gout, which he alone, of all his family, was subject to, by making its most violent attacks on the abdominal viscera, extremely debilitated his body; yet his mind never lost its vigour. For at least ten years labouring under its pernicious effects, he continued his public services, and his private exertions. It was a peculiar trait of his character, that when once his mind sought information upon any subject, he never relinquished the pursuit, until he had perfectly satisfied his mind respecting it. Guided by these principles, he read and studied every medical author, who treated of the disease with which he was afflicted, and discovered a remedy, that, for many years preserved his own life, and has been the means, under God, of relieving others.* But human efforts must have their termination. The dire disease, against which he had so long and skilfully contended, was destined to put an end to his virtuous and useful life.

He had retired from public service, with the thanks and applause of his fellow citizens, and for two years, passed his time in the bosom of his family, by whom he was almost idolized. Although no longer engaged in her service, his mind always dwelt on the freedom, the honour, and happiness of his beloved country. The events of the French revolution, and the principles of its leaders, had become subjects of anxious consideration to his mind. The dawn of that revolution he had heartily

* The late General Henry Lee, who was a member, with him, when Congress sat in New York, related an anecdote of a gentleman of that state, who came to the city, for relief against chronic diarrhœa. General Lee saw him about to leave the city, in despair —all medical aid had failed. He advised him to see, and introduced him to Mr. Lee, who gave him his recipe. In a short time after, General Lee saw the gentleman on his way home, quite well, who ascribed his recovery entirely to Mr. Lee's advice.

cheered; but its day had become, to his vision, overcast with portentous clouds. What his prophetic mind then foretold, history can now prove true; and often was he heard to mourn, lest the phrenzy of France, which seemed ready to overturn all the fixed principles of liberty, religion, and virtue, might, in a fatal degree, reach his native land, where he had trusted these salutary principles were destined to be permanent.

For six months before his death, Mr. Lee was almost entirely confined to his house. He saw his end approaching, and through faith in the merits of the Redeemer, viewed it with tranquil firmness. He had well fulfilled all the duties of life. As a patriot, as a friend to the liberty of mankind, as a parent, friend, and neighbour, he, like the younger Cato, whose character he much resembled, could say, "let guilt or fear disturb man's conscience, Cato knows neither of them;" and that "nature, worn out with care, sunk down to rest." It was the rest, prepared for those, whose virtues the great Parent of good, has approved; and which will be enjoyed by all, who devote their lives to the happiness of their fellow men, and to the duties they owe to their saving God.

Mr. Lee had early studied the evidences of the Christian religion, and had, through life, avowed his belief in its divine origin. He admired the perfection of its morality, and the sublimity of its peculiar theology. He was a member of the Episcopal Church; and although a hearty friend to all who professed the Gospel, he was strongly attached to the Church to which he belonged. The author found amongst his manuscripts, two votes passed by the two first meetings of the general convention of that Church, in the United States, in which their thanks are returned to Mr. Lee, for the interest he had taken in its prosperity.

Let not the infidel say, that Mr. Lee's assent to the truths of Christianity, was given in the twilight of his reason, and proclaimed at the approach of death. In the vigour of his mind, amid the honours of the world

and its enjoyment, he had declared his belief, in Jesus Christ, as the saviour of men! For many years of his life, he had partaken, in public, of the emblems of that propitiatory atonement, which he made upon the cross, "for the sin of the world."

The eloquent Erskine has truly said, after reviewing a glorious list of believers in Christianity, "Thus we find all that is great, or wise, or splendid, or illustrious, amongst created beings, all the minds gifted beyond ordinary nature, if not inspired by their Universal Author, for the advancement and dignity of the world, though divided by distant ages, and by the clashing opinions distinguishing them from one another, yet joining, as it were, in one sublime chorus, to celebrate the truths of Christianity, and laying upon its holy altars, the never-fading fruits of their immortal wisdom." To that list may be added the name of Richard Henry Lee.

Mr. Lee breathed his last, on the 19th day of June, in the year 1794, at his seat, Chantilly, in the county of Westmoreland, in the sixty-fourth year of his age; a few weeks before the celebration of the day, on which, his eloquent tongue, and intrepid mind, had given birth to the independence of his country!

It is a subject of regret, that no genuine specimen of the eloquence of Mr. Lee, remains. The author has not had the good fortune to enjoy the acquaintance of any of his cotemporaries, from whom he could obtain a sketch of the principal traits of his oratory.

Mr. Lee possessed all the qualifications necessary to a finished orator. His person was tall and well proportioned. The features of his face were bold and striking; and were always, particularly in debate, and conversation, irradiated by an eye, pouring intelligence over them. His gesture was elegant, and admirably appropriate, resulting from a nature, ardent, honest, and sincere. His voice was clear and melodious, and was modulated by the feeling that swayed his bosom. His elocution was dignified, animated, and impressive. His whole manner was fervid, manly, and commanding.

His style was pure and classic, adorned by brilliant periods, by the happiest classical allusions, by the richest truths of ethics, and by figures, which *pictured* the resemblance of the originals. It was distinguished by a "nervous brevity," or splendid amplification, as the auditory, the subject, and the occasion required. One who was well qualified to judge, has said of Mr. Lee, "He was indisputably a *graceful* orator, but his elegance was *natural.* His mind had treasures of various knowledge, to which he could readily resort; but, on occasions of importance, he studiously prepared himself for debate. He well knew, how and when to be diffuse and copious: but strength and conciseness were the characteristics of his eloquence. Dr. Rush said of him, "I never knew so great an orator, whose speeches were so short. Indeed, I might almost say, that he *could not* speak long. He conceived his subject so clearly, and presented it so immediately to his hearers, that there appeared nothing more to be said about it. He did not use figures to ornament discourse, but made them the vehicles of argument."*

Mr. Lee was considered an accomplished scholar. He was acquainted with the Latin, Greek, and French languages; and was familiar with the beauties of all the classic authors in prose and verse, in those tongues, and

* Dr Rush used to repeat a sentence, as illustrative of the conciseness of Mr. Lee's eloquence, and the force of his figures. The laws which had been passed, in some of the states, making paper money a tender for the payment of debts, were the subject of consideration in Congress. Mr. Lee had warmly opposed them, on all occasions. The idea of getting rid of debts, in so easy a manner, was plausible and captivating to some financiers; but to the mind of a sound statesman, no scheme seemed more delusive and injurious to the real good of a community. Some member had advocated these laws on the first opening of the subject, and seemed, in a speech just delivered, to be more and more wedded to the scheme, even after all its consequences had been shown. In answer to him, Mr. Lee begun, says the Doctor, thus, "Mr. Speaker—I did not wonder that the honourable gentleman was pleased with this scheme, *when in the bud;* but I am astonished that he grasps *at the full blown iniquity.*"

recurred to them with ease and taste. He had studied the writers of established reputation on the various branches of science and literature. He was extensively acquainted with history, and with all the various subjects necessary to form a great and useful statesman. The sketch which has been drawn of his person and oratory, by the hand of a master, is no less true than beautiful. "His face was on the Roman model; his nose Cæsarean; the port and carriage of his head, leaning persuasively and gracefully forward; and the whole contour, noble and fine. He had studied the classics, in the true spirit of criticism. His taste had that delicate touch, which seized with intuitive certainty, every beauty of an author, and his genius, that native affinity, which combined them without an effort. Into every walk of literature and science, he had carried this mind of exquisite selection, and brought it back to the business of life, crowned with every light of learning, and decked with every wreath that all the muses, and all the graces, could entwine. Nor did these light decorations constitute the whole value of its freight. He possessed a rich store of historical and political knowledge, with an activity of observation, and a certainty of judgment, which turned that knowledge to the very best account. He was not a lawyer by profession, but he understood thoroughly the constitution, both of the mother country and of her colonies; and the elements also of the civil and municipal law. Thus, while his eloquence was free from those stiff and technical restraints, which the habits of forensic speaking are so apt to generate, he had all the legal learning which is necessary to a statesman. He reasoned well, and declaimed freely and splendidly. The note of his voice was deep and melodious. It was the canorous voice of Cicero. He had lost the use of one of his hands, which he kept constantly covered with a black silk bandage, neatly fitted to the palm of his hand, but leaving his thumb free; yet, notwithstanding this disadvantage, his gesture was so graceful and highly finished, that it is said he had acquired it by practising before a

mirror.* Such was his promptitude, that he required no preparation for debate. He was ready for any subject, as soon as it was announced; and his speech was so copious, so rich, so mellifluous, set off with such bewitching cadence of voice, and such captivating grace of action, that while you listened to him, you desired to hear nothing superior, and indeed thought him perfect. He had a quick sensibility, and a fervid imagination."†

Mr. Lee's character as a politician, was strongly marked. "His earliest impressions were in favour of the most disinterested mode of serving the public." As rigidly honest and upright in public, as he was in private life, he never felt, and never admitted the truth of the ancient remark, so often quoted, "in rebus politicis, nihil simplex, nihil apertum, nihil honestum;" and he never failed to censure with the most pointed disapprobation, any act which could be thus characterized, even in his best friends, and firmest political associates. It was a maxim with him, which he frequently quoted as invariably true, that "honesty is the best policy." Hence he argued, that it formed no excuse for a national breach of positive engagements, that the other party has failed in the fulfilment of theirs, "for said he, the cause of honesty and virtue, when supported with firmness, will always triumph over vice and bad faith." This was the principle and tenour of his arguments on the subjects, of the payment of the British debts, and the surrender of the posts on the lakes, as stipulated by the treaty of peace between Great Britain, and the United States, in 1783.

Of Mr. Lee, it may most truly be said, that the love of his country, was "the ruling passion" of his soul. This principle guided his research into history, cheered

* This was said to give an idea of his gracefulness; not that it was a fact

† William Wirt, Esq. in his "Life of Patrick Henry," pp. 49, 50. In the above extract, points of comparison with other orators, are omitted.

and relieved his labours, and gave activity to all his energies.

The character of Mr. Lee will be contemplated with admiration by his countrymen. It adorned the infancy of the republic; and will, perhaps, cast a light and glory on the maturity of its splendid destiny!

APPENDIX.

NUMBER I.

My dear brother's favours all reached me in due time, at Bristol Wells, where I was spending the summer season, to look about me and form acquaintances, which may be useful hereafter. The ensuing winter I mean to spend in Bath, where I now am; a place to which Dr. Fothergill advised me, and where I expect his patronage. Your packet for Lord Shelburne, I shall deliver myself in a few days, at his country seat, about twenty miles off, where I am to spend a week. I have not been in London since Johnston's arrival, and as Dr. Fothergill is probably in the country I reserve your letter to him also to deliver myself, as I shall be in town soon.

My last letter from our brother F. of the 14th of June, made me exceedingly unhappy, as it brought an account of the dreadful accident which befell you about that time. I flatter myself that long before you receive this, you will have received entire relief from the effects of that misfortune, and I cannot now help chiding you, for being so very careless of a life on which the happiness of so many depend; the horses were notoriously vicious, and the dastardly temper of the negroes you well know. How then could you trust yourself so absolutely in their power as to injure yourself and afflict us? For heaven's sake, remember, that you are accountable to your country, and to those who love you, for your personal safety, which cannot be injured without very great detriment and disquietude to them. Heaven shield you from such disasters for the future, and grant you for the great share of misery you have already suffered, an uninterrupted series of prosperity and health. I may now I hope congratulate you on your marriage with Mrs. Pinkard; the small acquaintance I had with her gives me great reason to believe, she will make you happy; and I most ardently pray that her goodness may prevent both you and the poor little

ones who survive, from feeling the loss of the tender and amiable wife and mother that is gone.

The resolution into which you have entered, and which I perceive South Carolina has adopted, are in the highest degree laudable, and you may depend upon it will work your salvation. The ministry thinking it vain to contend against such virtue as they are now convinced animates America, are at present certainly disposed to conciliatory measures. But they are far from being yet brought to a due sense of what in justice they owe to the constitutional rights of the colonies. You have commenced those measures which tend to their conviction, and I make no question you will persevere, till that important purpose is fully accomplished. The intent of the monitors I sent you being entirely fulfilled, I do not ask what you did with those I sent you, though I have seen nothing of them in the papers.

The state of politics at present is, as appears to me, exceedingly complex. As far as I can unravel them, they consist of the court party, the opposition, and the constitutionalists. The Lords Holland and Bute, the Dukes of Bedford and Grafton, form the court party; Lords Temple, Chatham, and Mr. Grenville, with Rockingham, compose the opposition; and my Lord Shelburne heads the constitutionalists. The last party are the promoters of petitions, as the most proper method of informing the people of the constitutional power they possess, and of rousing them against the arbitrary measures of the court. The opposition, desirous of changing men only and not measures, are for determining the matter by the representative body by intrigue and influence. The constitutionalists are for appealing to the people at large, and effecting a change of measures, as well as of men. Mr. Wilkes, and all of his party that are honest, with Beckford, Townsend, Sawbridge, Mrs. Macauley, &c. are what I call constitutionalists. Of the political writers Junius only deserves reading, and his talents are certainly great. I cannot but think that my Lord Shelburne's abilities and virtue will force him again into power; though they render him exceedingly unwelcome at court, where such qualities are not in estimation. Happily for the liberties of this country, the court party are at variance among themselves; could they agree, I do not see what would prevent them, with a corrupt House of Commons, vast influence from places and money, with a powerful army, from absolutely subverting the constitution. But Bute possesses the ear, Bedford the parliamentary power; Grafton was the representative of the former, but the latter ever jealous and ambitious, has contrived to

gain the duke over by marriage. This, in all human probability, was the cause of Lord Bute's precipitate return, being alarmed, least in consequence of that connexion, Grafton should betray him, and uniting with Bedford, enable him to do what he has long wished, exclude his lordship from all influence in administration. When Peachum and Locket quarrel, they bring each other nearly to the gallows. Would to heaven, these political villains may be more irreconcilable in their anger. I am now at my Lord Shelburne's, where I have the pleasure of seeing perfect domestic happiness. Lady Shelburne is a pattern of every thing that is amiable and good; and her lord seems perfectly worthy of so valuable a wife. Much reading has produced in me the effect of age, in which confidence in political professions is slowly granted; and therefore highly as I esteem this lord, I do not implicitly confide in him. Yet, if he does not support the genuine cause of liberty and continue firm in constitutional principles, I do not believe there is a single man of eminence who will vindicate the violated rights of the people. A temporary support many will give, but an opposition grounded on true principles, and steadily pursued, I expect from him only. God send he may answer my expectations; if not, *actum est de libertate*. I am not so desperate with regard to America; the spirit of liberty seems now so truly and universally diffused, that I do not think it possible to suppress it; and therefore I look forward with infinite pleasure to that spirit, as the surest nurse of British constitutional liberty. I some time since sent enclosed to Mr. Parker and you, the proceedings respecting the Mississippi company. Nothing certain is to be expected from this ministry: when it is changed, I shall not fail to resume the solicitation.

I beg you will give my most cordial thanks to all those of my acquaintance, who have distinguished themselves in the resolution of not consuming British manufactures, and of maintaining firmly their constitutional rights. As a friend to freedom, I esteem myself infinitely obliged to every one who supports it.

My inviolable regard awaits you and yours. Adieu.

ARTHUR LEE.

P. S. Pray, remember me to our brother Thomas; I never hear of or from him, which I very much regret. My best wishes attend Belvieu.

August 15*th*, 1769.

BATH, November 15th, 1769.

My dear Brother—It appears to me a very long time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you. In the mean time I please myself with supposing you, with the rest of America, are working your own salvation by frugality and industry. Pertinent to this are your questions to our brother William, concerning the glass manufactory: in which, I am sorry to inform you, no satisfactory information can be obtained. Much care is taken at Bristol to provide against the loss of workmen; they are, therefore, articled for a certain time, and their wages artfully advanced, so as to keep them constantly in arrear, and thence in bondage. A very few only are entrusted with the secret of the materials, and their proportions. I wrote to a merchant of Bristol, immediately on my brother's receiving yours, for more precise information; but he has never answered me, probably through some jealousy in himself, or an apprehension of it in others. Newcastle would be the best place, I apprehend, not only to make inquiries without suspicion, but to apply for workmen. *Aerici persevere*, must be the motto of America. The people here do not yet complain much of the want of trade arising from the stoppage of American exports; but, by persevering, they will feel, and then will infallibly complain. What the ministry will do in the perturbed state of the empire, both at home and abroad, it is difficult to say; what they wish to do, is more easily imagined. Great, certainly, is the struggle between their arbitrary inclinations, and their fears to execute them.

The Mississippi affair rests entirely, and must do so, till the ministry are removed; whenever that happens, the company may be assured that I will resume the business, without any farther expense to them. Our brother William forgot to bring over a minute of the company's resolution, appointing me agent; so that had my credentials been required, nothing could have been done. Happily they were not; but to provide against it for the future, I could wish you and Mr. Parker would send me such credentials as you may think proper. Please to remember me to that gentleman, and tell him I hope every patriotic scheme succeeds, and that we shall see him in the next list of the House of Burgesses, in J. R—ph's place. I wish things were reversed, and this tool of power were his deputy. Your governor is becoming very popular, as we are told here, and I have the worst proof of it in the increased orders for fineries from the ladies, at this time of general distress in their families. Either our countrywomen

are misrepresented by the merchants' wives, or they are growing deplorably extravagant. If his excellency introduces such a spirit, I am sure his popularity will be ill founded. Wilkes's suit with Lord Halifax is at length determined, with £4000 damages, which it was provided in court the treasury was to pay. Inadequate as these would, in any case, have been, the manner in which they are to be paid, prevents them from being exemplary; since no minister will be deterred from repeating this injury by a fine which he is not to pay. Our houses, liberties, and most interesting secrets, are thus at the mercy of any minister who will pay this sum out of the treasury, which, with the present furniture of St. Stephen's chapel, he might do to-morrow without danger of impeachment. Yet there are many men so wicked or so weak, as to deny that the constitution is in danger. There are men who will never believe their houses are near the flames, till they are on fire; so long as they walk free, they care not who is illegally imprisoned. The Parliament will probably meet about the middle of January; it will be an important session, but I believe attended with no farther good, than convincing the people their complaints are just, and their desire of a dissolution perfectly proper. I am extremely well with Lord S——e, the lord mayor, the sheriffs, Mr. Wilkes, Horne, Macauley, Belles, &c.; the two first and the last are those only of whose principles I have a good opinion; but I am so sensible of my own deficiency in judgment, that, while I act in the integrity of my heart, I do not suffer my suspicions to influence my actions. I dine frequently in the King's Bench, where I meet the declared patriots; of whom I shall be satisfied, if we find one Sidney in twelve elect. The city of London is, however, in our possession, and will support the character it has always maintained, of standing foremost and firm in opposition to arbitrary power. It is a chance whether you ever meet with a series of letters signed Junius Americanus, in which the enemies of America are chiefly attacked; though, to make what was written in defence of the colonies acceptable, it was necessary to give now and then a stroke to the characters obnoxious here. It is desirable to make a signature popular, when that is effected, I shall be able to write for America under it with success, which it is otherwise extremely difficult to accomplish. Send copies of Parker's edition of the Farmer's Letters to Lord Shelburne, Mrs. Macauley, and Colonel Barre. Farewell.

ARTHUR LEE.

A very ill timed fever, my dear sir, confining me to my bed and room for some days past, has for the present marred my Mississippi and political operations. Of the former, therefore, I can say nothing more, than what the enclosed, written a week since, contains; of politics little certain can be said, for no one yet knows, what the Parliament, which meets to-morrow, will determine. The ministry are entirely Bedfordian, neither much in confidence of the landed or mercantile part of the nation, but they are of Lord Bute's complexion, and have therefore the royal ear and protection. Grafton is the premier, profligate, arbitrary and contemptible; Weymouth, abandoned to gaming and drinking, totally involved, but extremely clever; North, Gower, and Bristol, nothing; Hillsborough or Pownall, arbitrary, opinionated, subtle, and severe: of these the present council are formed, without one speaker or advocate in the House of Commons. All parties will, it is probable, be opposed to them, but virtue and real patriotism are so little the objects of pursuit to any party, that it is rather a scuffle who shall enjoy the power and wealth of office, than who shall administer peace and welfare to the nation. This being the case, the sovereign will always turn the scale, since such ministers can never acquire the confidence of the nation, so as to be independent of court influence; this makes me apprehend that the present ministry, as being certainly that of the favourite, though he be now abroad, will stand, and they are, to all intents and purposes, enemies to America. They delude us here with talking of conciliating measures, but it is only to try once more the effect of art and management, in disuniting the colonies, while it is evident they are collecting a great force at Boston, to crush, as they fondly flatter themselves, the head of opposition at one blow; from the perseverence of your colony much is feared, and greatly is it expected, that the address, powers, and beguiling splendor of his excellency, will detach it from the cause of liberty, obtain a vote subversive of your former resolves, and acknowledging your promptitude to bend the servile knee, and fawning take the splendid robbers' boon. Severe will be the trial, but more exemplary, therefore, the virtue that triumphs over it; alas! I fear it will not be found, where meanness and servility are already to prevalent among the little great people of your colony: yet on the issue of this essay must I hereafter glory in being a Virginian, or hide my head when it is mentioned. Subtlety and arbitrariness being the characteristics of the present ministry, great prudence, caution and management, will be requisite to frustrate their measures, or elude their revenge.

You may be assured, if they stand this session, and their present policy succeeds not in America, the first step to enforcement, will be the seizing and executing the patriotic leaders; in your conduct therefore let me recommend an attention to the conduct of the first prince of Orange, which saved him from an ignominious death, and effectually vindicated the liberties of his country, while the incaution of his associates made them victims to the bloody and revengeful purposes of the tyrant they opposed. Our first duty is to our country unquestionably, and her dearest right is liberty; but if this be not the sense of the people, if there is no prospect of opposing tyrannous measures with success, 'twere better wait the favourable moment, since once engaged, success, eternal enmity, or death, must be the issue. Cato, Brutus, and Cassius, did not precipitately undertake a hopeless cause, but they made a glorious and dreadful struggle, that failing, death was the only worthy end of such a beginning. O how my soul swells with the great idea, methinks I could smile in the very pangs of death, and pity the insulting tyrant. Should such a trial come, and my weak flesh shrink from the nobler purposes of my soul, to what contempt it would reduce me. Inured to war and death, habit had steeled their bodies, and made them equal to the achievement of every daring resolution; happy had I been bred a soldier, or these trying times had not arrived in my day. These are reflections which I cannot avoid, though they leave stings behind them; the very doubt of bearing unmoved the utmost efforts of afflicting power, and telling the tyrant or his minion to the last, I scorned him, is to me grievous.

I have not sent you the Museum Rusticum, because it is certainly too dear for its usefulness; and another publication is daily expected, which perhaps may be preferable. I reserve Tissot, till I have leisure to read him, and make some annotations for you. There is a book, some time since published, called a Handmaid to the Arts, which should be useful to you; if I think so upon examining, it shall be sent. The Court Register will be published the 28th of this month, therefore I hardly think it worth while sending the old one now. I know of nothing else worth your attention.

October 9th. The great debate is passed, administration has carried her point, forcing by the sword, over the colonies, those laws which reason and justice cannot support or establish. Dreadful idea, that even suggested in a free house, ought to have excited indignation and abhorrence. To the king's speech, containing an account of America, being in an alienated state of allegiance and submission to law;

and one part, namely Boston, in the verge of rebellion through the agency of some seditious persons. An address was moved for by Lord Henly, Lord Northington's son, approving the steps which had been taken by the King in America, and promising him support. This was seconded by Mr. Stanley, who said the late acts were intended to bring this contest of right to an issue; that the troops had been drawn together in America, to enforce it with more facility, and had now commenced the operation in Boston. Mr. Dowdswall, late chancellor of the exchequer, moved for an amendment, using milder terms towards the Americans, and not expressing any approbation of ministerial measures. Lord Clare, and Lord North, supported the former, with heavy, if not unwarrantable charges, against the people of Boston, and high ideas of absolute power. The amendment was then supported by Sir G. Seville, but not on American principles. Mr. Burke next entered more largely, and with more masterly eloquence into the transactions of Governor Bernard and the administration. He showed, the present disturbances arose from a concerted plan, and intentional injuries offered the people of Boston; that the right of taxing, and the laws founded on it, were repugnant to the feelings of America, which never could be overcome; he insisted, that the requiring the Assembly of Boston, to rescind a vote, under penalty, was absolutely illegal and unconstitutional; that sending soldiers there and demanding provision for them, was directly repugnant to the act of Parliament, which directs that provision to be made by the Assembly. Mr. Grenville then advised unanimously supporting the measures of administration in subduing the colonies; he praised his S. A. talked much about himself, and condemned the minister's mandate for rescinding, as totally illegal. Colonel Barre next spoke with great judgment, upon the question in favour of the amendment; he questioned the right, disapproved the measures, and demonstrated that they were urging a quarrel with their colonies, from an ill grounded jealousy, when the state of Europe made harmony absolutely requisite to our preservation. Mr. Wedderburn then pointed out with great justice, that government, both at home and abroad, was executed by files of musketeers; that laws were obeyed not from a respect and confidence in the people for the legislature and government, but from terror; a dreadful state existed by some unhappy defect in the executive part, which threatened our ruin; he declared against the legality of the ministerial mandate at Boston. Many others spoke on both sides, but the ministry carried it without a division.

All this I consider as done in heat, and hope better information and more dispassionate deliberation, will produce the conciliating measures of recalling Bernard, and repealing the duty acts; should this not be done, I apprehend that the present establishment of the military in America, will prevent any armed opposition to the measures of administration; but I conceive the Americans will endeavour by those means, of not consuming British manufactures, which are absolutely in their power, to bring this ungrateful country to a better sense of their usefulness to her, and how vain the attempt is to rule by force, a free people.

Mr. Burke asserted, that Chatham and Camden, had both acted towards America inconsistently with those principles; which, coming from such great authorities, had confirmed the colonists in their opinion, the Parliament having no right to tax them.

God knows whether this will be suffered to reach you; for the administration are determined to sacrifice the most active in the American cause, and may probably stop letters.

Yours, &c.

ARTHUR LEE.

The author has here added some letters written to Arthur Lee, by some of his English friends, who were distinguished men of their day.

The following letter is from Lord Cardross, afterwards Lord Buchan, a well known friend of America, who made General Washington, a present of a snuff-box, from the wood of the tree, which sheltered Wallace, the Scotch hero.

WALCOT, near Bath, Oct. 31, 1769.

My dear Sir—I should be very happy to be entrusted with the welfare of Virginia, and I am sure, I should pass my time most agreeably among you; but I am afraid I love you all too well, to have that charge committed to me at present, after what has passed; not that I think any plan is likely to be adopted, of a disagreeable tendency, but that my avowed sentiments, with respect to my countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, might be thought too strongly favourable to certain demands which may be made. There remains another obstacle, and that is, as my father is, I am sorry to say, in a very precarious state of health: it would seem odd for an Earl, according to the ideas of this country, to be deputy to Sir Jeffery Amherst.

I told you, that I had my eye on Turin, but I had much rather be with you, I assure you; and if any opening should happen, by the death or resignation of Fauquier, I don't know but I may make an essay, to your satisfaction. In the mean time, I think myself very happy in having one there so partial to me, as you are, and who will never mention my name, without saying, that I am a friend to liberty and to the friendless.

I ever am, dear Sir,
With great esteem,
Your most obliged and obt. servant,
CARDROSS.

P. S. Governor Dinwiddie asks after you, with regard; he is not well at present.

Pray remember the Museum at Edinburgh, which I espouse at present, and send me some of your country productions.

The following letter is from John Wilkes; it is here inserted, as relating to the politics of the times, and as curious, because its author connected his name, with the political history of England. Of Wilkes, Chatham declaimed, and Junius wrote. The "little incident" of which Mr. Wilkes speaks, was the loss of the papers of Arthur Lee, then accredited American commissioner at the court of Berlin. Shortly after Mr. Lee's arrival at Berlin, his trunk was broken open, and his papers taken out; upon Mr. Lee's complaining to the Prussian ministry, the papers were returned to Mr. Lee, by an unknown person. It was well ascertained afterwards, that his papers had been taken away, by the procuring of Mr. Liston, the English minister at Berlin. Upon this occasion Frederick the Great himself, wrote a note to Mr. Lee, complimenting his country and its representative. Wilkes' and Junius' dislike to the Scottish politicians, is well known.

PRINCE'S COURT, November 9th, 1777.

I was made extremely happy, my Dear Sir, by the most friendly letter, which you honoured me with, by Monsieur Montandone; and I am farther to thank you for giving me the opportunity of knowing so sensible and ingenious a gentleman; I eagerly embraced every occasion of being with him, and his amiable lady, but the ill state of her health, obliges her to pass a considerable part of her stay, in this Island, at Bath, which Miss Wilkes and I greatly regretted.

The little adventure at Berlin, was a low piece of Scottish knavery, exactly calculated for the meanness of fraud, in those pedlars of politics, who, boasting all the while of economy, have lost a continent.

This poor country is fallen into a fatal lethargy, from which all efforts to rouse her seem ineffectual. The single loss of Minorca, drove the people of England almost to madness; now thirteen provinces dismembered from the British empire scarcely excite a murmur, except among a very few, who dare to love their country even at this disgraceful period. The parliamentary campaign will soon open, but nothing is to be expected. Corruption has spread like a low born mist, *a Scottish mist*, and pervades every thing. Poor opposition, too, wants a head, and is feeble and sickly in all its members.

I am very sensible of your kindness to young Smith of Berlin, and was made very happy by your favourable account of him. I hope, I am not to blush for him in future life, but trust he will justify your obliging partiality to him.

In all the changes or chances of this political warfare, remember, my dear sir, you have here a warm friend, who would rejoice in every opportunity of convincing you of his attachment, and be highly gratified by your correspondence.

Vale, et me ama.

P. S. Miss Wilkes desires to add her compliments.

The following letter was from Colonel Barré, whose eloquent defence of the colonies is so well known to every reader.

LONDON, January 31st, 1771.

SIR—I should long since have acknowledged the receipt of your very obliging letter of last June, if I had been in England; but I was, at the time of its arrival, in a remote part of Europe, and now seize this as the first opportunity which presents itself since my return, to pay my respects to you.

I see you lament, with all the feelings of true patriotism, that the firmness of America, has at last given way to the combined arts of ministerial and mercantile wickedness. It was very difficult to resist the former, and, upon my word, I think it fair to call the latter, rather mercantile weakness, than wickedness. Some of the most considerable men throughout your continent are employed in active commerce. They stood long in defence of the rights of their fellow subjects, but the ministers have had sagacity enough to see, that (be-

sides the jealousy of each other,) the expense of the contest, lay too heavy upon that body of men, to continue much longer. However, it must be confessed upon the whole, that America has shown, in the late struggle, a strong love of liberty, a spirited resentment, and most uncommon abilities.

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your two presents. Their intrinsic worth is rare, and the manner of sending them, very flattering. It must give me great pleasure to find, that my poor services are still remembered in America, and that I hold a place, in the esteem of so respectable a man, as Mr. Lee.

I have the honour to be, with great regard and consideration, Sir,

Your most obedient, and most humble servant,

ISAAC BARRE.

The following letter is from William Wyndham, who was a distinguished politician and speaker in the House of Commons.

My dear Sir—I did not imagine, when we last met in London, that it would so soon happen to me, to address a letter to you, as one of the commissioners of the United States of America. I most heartily wish you joy, of a situation so honourable and distinguished. The sentiments which I have ever entertained on American matters, at a time when affairs had the least promising aspect, will sufficiently witness, the sincerity of this congratulation. I would wish to say a great deal of what is uppermost in my mind, on the present most extraordinary juncture, but the hurry in which I am obliged to write, will confine me to the immediate subject of this letter. I have taken the opportunity of my being in France for a few days, and meeting with Captain Johnson, to send this letter and one enclosed to you, with the hope, that you will take some safe opportunity of sending the enclosed, to my friend* in Carolina. I have ventured to propose, in my letter to him, that he should direct a letter to me, to your care. I am sensible I am taking a liberty, but I am driven to it by my desire to hear from him, and my ignorance of any other means by which I might hope a letter would come safe.

In the summer, I think, I shall be tempted to make a short visit to Paris. It would give me particular pleasure to find

* The name could not be made out.

you there. What a spectacle have our worthy court exhibited to the indignation and scorn of Europe. When I think of the acquiescence of the nation, under such men and manners, I really begin almost "desperare de republica," and to hold less firmly to an opinion, which I have kept fast to hitherto, that the bulk of the people of England, had still a fund of those qualities, which, till lately, rendered them deservedly the admiration of all who knew them. I should be very happy to have now some more of such conversations as we used to have on these matters formerly. I am at a loss how to enclose this letter, in a way to make myself known, without signing my name, which might perhaps be inconvenient; after the description, which Captain Johnson may give, it may probably be sufficient to add, that we met at poor Alleyne's,* the last time we dined there, Jones† was one of the party.

Believe me, dear sir, with great truth,

Your most obedient and faitful servant,

W. W.

Dunkirk, March 12, 1778,
I live now in Pall-Mall.

* Alleyne was a very brilliant advocate, and a lawyer of great promise. He was the friend and companion of Dunning, &c. He died early in life.

† Sir William Jones.

NUMBER II.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of several natives of America, showeth, That your petitioners being natives of his majesty's dominions in America, are deeply interested in every proceeding of this right honourable house, which touches the life, liberty, or property, of any person, or persons, in the said dominions. That your petitioners conceive themselves and their fellow subjects, to be entitled to the rights of natural justice, and to the common law of England, as their unalienable birth right. That they apprehend it to be an invariable rule of natural justice, that no man shall be condemned unheard; and that, according to law, no person, or persons, can be judged without being called upon to answer, and being permitted to hear the evidence against them, and to make their defence. That it is, therefore, with the deepest concern, they understand, that there is now before this right honourable House, a bill of pains and penalties to be inflicted on the town of Boston, for a trespass committed by some persons unknown, upon the property of the East India Company, without the said town having been apprised of any accusation being brought against them, or permitted to hear the evidence, if there be any, or to make their defence. That the bill takes away immediately from the inhabitants of the town, the use of property to the amount of several hundred thousand pounds, vested in quays, wharves, stores, &c. That it will restrain many thousands of his majesty's subjects from subsisting themselves and their families, by their usual employments. That it will punish the innocent for the guilty, and even should all the reparation required by the bill be made, the restoration of that property, or any part of it, is suffered to depend solely upon the will of the crown.

Your petitioners conceive such proceedings to be directly repugnant to every principle of law and justice, and that, under such a precedent, no man, or body of men, could enjoy a moment's security; for, if judgment be immediately to fol-

low an accusation, the accused, unacquainted with the charge, and debarred from defending themselves, every fence against false accusations will be pulled down; justice will no longer be a shield, nor innocence an exemption from punishment. Your petitioners beg leave to represent, that the law in America ministers redress for any injury sustained there, and they can most truly affirm, that it is administered in that country with as much impartiality as in any other part of his majesty's dominions. In proof of this, they appeal to an instance of great notoriety, in which, under every circumstance that could exasperate the people, and disturb the course of justice, Captain Preston and his soldiers had a fair trial, and a favourable verdict. The due course of law thus manifestly holding out redress, they cannot but consider the interposition of Parliamentary power to be as unnecessary as it is arbitrary and unjust. Your petitioners conceive that the right honourable House, being the supreme judicature of this nation, are too well acquainted with the inviolable rules of justice to require any further objections to the bill against the town of Boston, now under consideration. They, therefore, trust and pray that the right honourable house will not pass a bill which is to condemn and punish persons unheard, and, therefore, deprived of that privilege which every principle of justice, and every practice of law, allows to the meanest individual; the privilege of hearing and controverting the evidence against him, and maintaining his innocence.

And your commissioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

THATCHED HOUSE TAVERN, LONDON, March 26th, 1774.

The above is a literal copy of a petition this day drawn up and signed, here, by the sheriffs of London, Doctor Franklin, R. Izard, William Middleton, Esquires, Colonel Lawrence, and many other of the first gentlemen of South Carolina. The honourable John Ellis, one of the council of Jamaica, and worth at least twenty thousand pounds per annum; Arthur Lee, Esq. and many other gentlemen of the several colonies of North Carolina, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and the several New England governments, and is to be presented, on Monday next, the 28th instant, to the House of Lords.

(Witness)

WILLIAM LEE.

NUMBER III.

The following Letter was addressed to the Author by the honourable John Jay.

BEDFORD, West Chester County, New York,
12th February, 1823.

Sir—I received, by the last mail, your friendly letter of the 30th ultimo, the principal object of which, you observe, is to obtain from me, if I recollect minutely on the subject, a correct account of the part which your grandfather acted in the *three* leading committees appointed by the Congress of 1774; these were committees to prepare an address to the *king* of England—to the people of *Great Britain*—and to the Colonies. The committee for the *first* address, consisted of Messrs. Lee, J. Adams, Johnson, Henry, and Rutledge; to this committee, Mr. Dickenson was afterwards added. You further observe, that it had been generally understood that Mr. Lee was the writer of that address; but that it has since been ascribed to Mr. Dickenson. So many years have elapsed since the Congress of 1774, that my recollection, as to many of the occasional and incidental circumstances, which occurred in the course of their proceedings, is not distinct.

It appears, from the journals of that Congress, that the committee to prepare an address to the *king*, reported a draught of such an address, on the 21st October; that, after some debate it was *recommitted*, and that Mr. J. Dickenson was, on *that day*, added to the committee. So soon afterwards as the 24th October, they again reported; and on the next day, viz. the 25th October, the address they had reported, was debated, and, after some amendments, approved. By which of the members of the committee it was written, I do not remember to have been informed. To me, it appears probable that the *same* draught which had been recommitted, was, with the co-operation of Mr. Dickenson, amended, and again reported. That Mr. Dickenson, between the 21st October, when he was added to the committee, and the 24th

October, when they, for the last time reported, should have proposed to the committee to lay aside their draught, and that he, with their approbation, should have undertaken, and to their satisfaction, have finished, an entire *new* address, is, in my opinion, improbable, especially considering his sense of propriety, and the characters and abilities of the gentlemen of that committee.

On the 11th October, 1774, the Congress "*Resolved, unanimously*, That a *memorial* be prepared to the people of *British America*, stating to them the necessity of a firm, united, and invariable observation of the measures recommended by the Congress, as they tender the invaluable rights and liberties derived to them from the laws and constitution of their country. Also, "That an *address* be prepared to the people of *Great Britain*." "*Ordered*, That Mr. Lee, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Jay, be a committee to prepare a draught of the *memorial* and *address*."

It was agreed, in the committee, that Mr. Lee should prepare a draught of the proposed *memorial*, which was the first, both in order and importance; and that I should prepare a draught of the proposed *address* to the people of Great Britain, both of which were done accordingly. On the 18th October, the *address* to the people of Great Britain was reported to Congress. On the 19th October, it was debated by paragraphs, and sundry amendments made; and was recommitted, in order that the amendments might be taken in. On the 21st October, it was returned to Congress, and the amendments directed, being made, the same was appointed. On the 19th October, the committee reported a draught of a *memorial* to the inhabitants of the British colonies. On the 21st October, the Congress resumed the consideration of the *memorial*, and the same, being debated by paragraphs and amended, was approved. I have always believed that this memorial was written by Mr. Lee, nor have any reasons to doubt it, come to my knowledge. On the same day, viz. 21st October, the Congress "*Resolved*, That an address be prepared to the people of *Quebec*, and letters to the colonies of St. Johns, &c." "*Ordered*, That Mr. *Cushing*, Mr. *Lee*, and Mr. *Dickenson*, be a committee to prepare the above *address* and letters." Hence it appears, that your idea of my being one of that committee, is not correct. On the 24th October, the address to the people of *Quebec*, being brought in, was read, and, after some debate, was recommitted. On the 26th October, the committee to whom the address to the inhabitants of *Quebec* was recommitted, reported a draught, which was read, and, being debated by paragraphs and

amended, was approved." I have often heard it said, and not heard it contradicted, that this address was written by Mr. Dickenson. On the 25th October, the Congress "*Resolved*, That the address to the *king*, be enclosed in a letter to the several colony agents, &c. and "*Ordered*, That Mr. Lee and Mr. Jay prepare a letter to the agents." On the 26th October, the letter to the agents being brought in by the committee, was read and approved; this letter was written by Mr. Lee.

The committee (mentioned in the postscript of your letter) appointed to state the rights of the colonies, &c., included a number of gentlemen, whose information and talents, enabled them to discuss and elucidate those topics very ably; but, I cannot particularize how far Mr. Lee, or any other individual of those gentlemen, contributed to the accomplishment of that business. The uninterrupted deputation of Mr. Lee to Congress, by his native and important state, during many years of danger and difficulty, and his continued participation in the transaction of affairs of such moment, afford inferences on which much might be said. Although a recent increase of sickness, renders occupation irksome to me, yet as a further increase of it might suspend, and perhaps prevent my attending to your *inquiries*, I think it better to answer your letter thus concisely, than to postpone writing. Those inquiries need no apology. The friendly sentiments expressed in your letter, merit, and have my acknowledgments. With the best wishes for your success and welfare, I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,
JOHN JAY.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

NUMBER IV.

To the King's most excellent Majesty.

The humble address and petition of the lord mayor, aldermen, and commons, in common council assembled.

Most gracious sovereign, your majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the lord mayor, aldermen, and commons, of the city of London, in common council assembled, with all humility, beg leave to lay themselves at your royal feet, humbly imploring your benign attention to the grievous distractions of their fellow subjects in America.

The characteristic of the people, sire, over whom you reign, has ever been equally marked for an unparalleled loyalty to their sovereign, whilst the principles of the constitution have been the rule of his government, as for a firm opposition, whenever their rights have been invaded.

Your American subjects, royal sir, descended from the same ancestors with ourselves, appear equally jealous of the prerogatives of freemen, without which they cannot deem themselves happy.

Their cheerful and unasked for contributions, as well as willing services to the mother country, while they remain free from the clog of compulsory laws, will, we are sure, plead powerfully with the humanity of your disposition, for readily granting them every reasonable opportunity of giving as freemen, what they seem resolutely determined to refuse, under the injunction of laws, made independent of their own consent. The abhorrence we entertain of civil bloodshed and confusion, will, we trust, sire, if not wholly exculpate us in your royal mind, yet plead powerfully in our favour, for the warmth with which we lament those measures, the dsetructive principles of which, have driven our American brethren to acts of desperation.

Convinced of the earnest disposition of the colonists to remain firm in all duteous obedience to the constitutional authority of this kingdom, permit us most gracious sovereign to beseech you, that those operations of force, which at present distract them with the most dreadful apprehensions, may be suspended; and that, uncontrolled by a restraint incompatible with free government, they may have an opportunity of tendering such terms of accommodation, as we have

no doubt will approve them worthy of a distinguished rank among the firmest friends of this country.

Your petitioners do therefore most earnestly beseech your majesty to dismiss immediately, and for ever, from your councils, those ministers and advisers. As the first step towards a full redress of those grievances, which alarm and afflict your whole people.

So shall peace and commerce be restored, and the confidence and affection of all your majesty's subjects be the solid supporters of your throne.

NUMBER V.

Copy of the letter written by Thomas Jefferson to Richard Henry Lee, Esq. enclosing the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, as first reported. The passages omitted by Congress are printed in Italics, and the substitutions are given at the bottom of each page.

PHILADELPHIA, July 8th, 1776.

DEAR SIR—For news, I refer you to your brother, who writes on that head. I enclose you a copy of the Declaration of Independence, as agreed to by the House, and also as originally framed: you will judge whether it is the better or worse for the critics. I shall return to Virginia after the 11th of August. I wish my successor may be certain to come before that time: in that case, I shall hope to see you, and not Wythe, in convention, that the business of government, which is of everlasting concern, may receive your aid. Adieu, and believe me to be,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *in general Congress assembled.*

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God, entitle them; a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires, that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with *inherent and inalienable** rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that when-

* Certain unalienable rights.

ever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or *to* abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments, long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes. And, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, *begun at a distinguished period, and* pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to *expunge** their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain, is a history of *unremitting*† injuries and usurpations; *among which appears no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenour of the rest;* but all *have*‡, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world: *for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.*

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has *neglected utterly*§ to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly *and continually*, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers,

* Alter. † Repeated. ‡ Having. § Utterly neglected

incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither; and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

*He has suffered the administration of justice totally to cease in some of these states, refusing** his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made *our* judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices *by a self-assumed power*, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their *substance*.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies *and ships of war*, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation,

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us† of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these states;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our government;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring them-

* He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing.

† In many cases.

selves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, *withdrawing his governors, and* declaring us out of his *allegiance and* protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries, to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy,* unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions *of existence; he has excited treasonable insurrections of our fellow citizens with the allurements of forfeiture and confiscation of our property.*

He has constrained *others,*† taken captives on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian *king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where* MEN *should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished dye, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which* he *has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom* he *obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the* liberties *of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the* lives *of another.*

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which *may* define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of *a people who mean to be*

* Scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally.
† Our fellow citizens.

*free.** *Future ages will scarce believe that the hardiness of one man adventured within the short compass of twelve years only, to build a foundation, so broad and undisguised, for tyranny over a people, fostered and fixed in principles of freedom.*

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend *a*† jurisdiction over *these our states.*‡ We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here; *no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expense of our own blood and treasure, unassisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league and amity with them; but that submission to their Parliament was no part of our constitution, nor ever in idea, if history may be credited: and* we§ appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, *as well as to the*‖ ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which *were likely to*¶ interrupt our connexion and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice, and of consanguinity; *and when occasions have been given them, by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have, by their free election, re-established them in power. At this very time too, they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but* [*Scotch and*] *foreign mercenaries to invade and destroy us. These facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection; and manly spirit bids us to renounce for ever these unfeeling brethren. We must endeavour to forget our former love for them;* we must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur and of freedom, it seems, is below their dignity. Be it so, since they will have it. The road to happiness and to glory is open to us too; we will climb it apart from them, and acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our eternal separation!

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in general Congress assembled, appealing to the

* Of a free people. † An unwarrantable. ‡ Us. § Have.
‖ And we have conjured them by. ¶ Would inevitably.

Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these *states*,* reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the kings of Great Britain, and all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve all political connexion which may heretofore have subsisted between us and the Parliament or people of Great Britain; and, finally, we do assert the colonies to be free and independent states, and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

* Colonies.

NUMBER VI.

General C. Lee's Letter to Earl Percy, when the latter was enclosed with the British Army in Boston, 1775.

My Lord—Were your lordship only a common colonel of a regiment, certainly I should not have given myself the trouble of writing, nor you the trouble of reading this; but as you hold so high a rank, and will, one day, hold a still higher, I conceive it will not be improper to address you. And, in some measure, to apologize for my seeming want of respect, as I have not waited on the general, for reasons which he cannot, I think, disapprove, I was not certain whether you might, in your military capacity, consider my visit as proper: but, as you are not merely a soldier, but a citizen of the first class and importance, from your illustrious family and fashion, your vast property, and being destined by birth to be a counsellor of the nation, I think some explanation of my conduct, not only proper, but necessary: and I flatter myself, that some time or other, your lordship will not simply approve my conduct, but become a friend to the same cause. My lord, I will venture to say, it is the cause of Great Britain as well as of America: it is the cause of mankind. Were the principle of taxing America without their consent, admitted, Great Brttain would that instant be ruined. The pecuniary influence of the crown, and the army of placemen and pensioners, would be so increased, that all opposition to the most iniquitous measures of the most iniquitous ministers, would be forever borne down. Your lordship, I am sure, must be sensible, that the pecuniary influence is already enormously too great, and that a very wicked use is made of it. On these principles, every good Englishman, abstracted from any particular regard for America, must oppose her being taxed by the Parliament of Great Britain, or more properly by the first lord of the treasury: for in fact, the parliament and treasury, have of late years, been one and the same thing. But, my lord, I have besides, a very particular regard for America; I was long among them, and I know them to be the most loyal, affectionate, zealous subjects of the whole empire. General Gage himself, must acknowledge the truth of what I

advance: he was witness through the course of the last war, of their zeal, their ardour, their enthusiasm, for whatever concerned the welfare, the interest, and the honour of the mother country. When I see, therefore, the extreme of calamities, attempted to be brought down upon such a people, by the intrigues of such a couple of scoundrels as Bernard and Hutchinson; when I see a minister, violent and tyrannical, like *North*, mowing down whole communities, merely to indulge his hereditary hatred to liberty, and those who are attached to her, I think it the duty of every honest man and friend to humanity, to exert his utmost to defeat the diabolical purpose. That these people have been totally misrepresented at home: that they have been most unjustly and cruelly treated, your lordship will, I make no doubt, be sooner or later convinced; but as from your present situation, and many circumstances, you will not probably fall into the way of truth so soon as I could wish, I beg leave to recommend to your perusal, a sort of pamphlet, lately sent from England: it is entitled, "A true state of the proceedings in the Parliament of Great Britain, and in the province of the Massachusetts Bay." Mr. . . . . will furnish your lordship with it, if you will make use of my name: it is a fair and candid relation of the whole process, from beginning to end. When your lordship has read it, you will be struck with compassion and horror, and I have great hopes, will become a not less warm, but more powerful friend, of this much injured country, than myself. I take the liberty of recommending this method to your lordship, as it is impossible you should gather any thing but misinformation from the men, who, I find, surround *head quarters*. The Sewell's and Paxton's, are not only interested to misrepresent and calumniate, but to exterminate their country: there is no medium: their country must perish, or they meet with the deserts of impious parricides. It was the misfortune of General Gage, from the beginning, to fall into such hands as these; had he not been deluded by men of this stamp, we should never have seen him acting in a capacity so incompatible with the excellence of his natural disposition. I must now, my lord, entreat, that as fools and knaves, will, from misunderstanding and malice, probably disfigure my conduct, you will not suffer them to make any wrong impressions; that you will be persuaded that I act not from pique or disappointment, which I conclude, will be insinuated, but from principle. I think, my lord, an English soldier owes a very great degree of reverence to the king, as first magistrate, and third branch of the legislature, called to this mighty station by the voice of the

people: but I think he owes still a greater degree to the rights and liberties of his country: I think his country is every part of the empire; that in whatever part of the empire a flagitious minister manifestly invades these rights and liberties, whether in Great Britain, Ireland, or America, every Englishman, soldier or not soldier, ought to consider their cause as his own. And that the rights and liberties of this country are invaded, every man who has eyes, and is not determined to keep them shut, must see. These, my lord, are my principles; from these, I swear by all that's sacred and tremendous, I purely and solely act; and these, I hope, will rather serve, than prejudice me, in your lordship's opinion. I flatter myself still further, I flatter myself that you, my lord, before long, will adopt them: that you will, at least, in your letters to your father, whom I have been always taught to esteem as an honest man and a friend to humanity, endeavour to undeceive the people at home, if the delusion is not too strong. I can venture to affirm, that you will feel some consolation amidst the calamities ready to fall upon your country, in the reflection that you have attempted to avert them. I shall now finish, my lord, with entreating, that if any thing appears impertinent, either in the matter or length of this letter, you will attribute it to an intemperate zeal in an honest cause; and that you will be assured, I should not have addressed it to a man, of whom I entertained an unfavourable opinion.

I am your obedient servant,

CHARLES LEE.

NUMBER VII.

Letter from a Committee of Congress to General Washington.

PHILADELPHIA, April 10, 1777.

SIR—In obedience to an order of Congress, we inform your excellency of the reasons and principles that have governed Congress in their resolution for forming a camp on the west side of Delaware. The repeated information that hath been received of the enemy's movements, and it being the opinion of your excellency, as well as of many other General Officers, that this city was the object of such movements, rendered it proper that means should be fallen upon to prevent the success of such a design, as well to guard against the bad impression that it would certainly have on the affairs of America in general, as to give security to the valuable stores here collected, and which cannot speedily be removed. It has been considered, that if the real object of the enemy should be this city, the troops are here well fixed, and it will be an encouraging place of resort to the militia of this state, in their present unfixed condition, being between their old plan of association, and their new but yet unexecuted law. On the other hand, should the design of the enemy be upon Hudson river, or more eastward, the troops here may with ease reach that river before their's, now at head quarters, can have all crossed it. But another consideration remains, and that is, should the enemy propose to remain in Jersey to attack your army, or should your excellency mean to make a decisive impression on them when your numbers are sufficient, in either of these suppositions, the troops ought not to be here. In the whole of this business, Congress mean not in any manner, to interfere with the designs, or to counteract the judgment of your excellency, but wish you freely to call up to head quarters, all, or any part of the troops encamped here, as you shall please. It is not supposed that this will occasion any delay, and will certainly prevent the injuries that would be derived to the troops, as well in health as discipline, from their entering and remaining any time in this city.

We have the honour to be, &c.

NUMBER VIII.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 21, 1776.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN—After expressing our hopes that this will find you all three safely fixed at Paris, we proceed with pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Deane's letter of the first of October. When we reflect on the character and views of the court of London, it ceases to be a wonder that the British ambassador, and every other British agent, should employ every means that tended to prevent European powers, but France more especially, from giving America aid in this war. Prospects of accommodation, it is well known, would effectually prevent foreign interference, and therefore, without one serious design of accommodating on any principle, but the absolute submission of America, the delusive idea hath been industriously suggested on both sides the water, that under cover of this dividing and aid withholding prospect, the vast British force sent to America, might have the fairest chance of succeeding. And this policy hath in fact done considerable injury to the United States, as we shall presently show by a just detail of this campaign, for it is not yet ended. You know, gentlemen, that at the moment a potent land and marine force was preparing to be sent here, an act was passed for appointing commissioners, whom too many expected were to give peace to America; as therefore the war might be soon concluded, so were our military arrangements accommodated, and the troops taken into service the last spring, consisting of regular corps and bodies of militia, were all engaged for short periods: with these the campaign began in various parts of North America. Dr. Franklin is so well acquainted with the progress of the war in Canada, previous to his departure, that we need only observe the campaign has ended as favourably for us in that quarter as we could reasonably expect. The enemy having been able to pierce no further than Crown Point, after a short stay, and reconnoitering General Gates's army at Ticonderoga, thought proper to recross the lake, and leave us in quiet possession of those passes. General Gates having left a proper force at Ticonderoga, and on the communication. retired with the rest of his troops.

New York and its neighbourhood, not being defensible by an army, singly against a strong land and sea force acting in conjunction, was of necessity yielded to the enemy, after some contest; General Washington retiring until the situation of the country above Kings-bridge, no longer enabled the enemy to receive aid from their ships. General Howe being stopped here, and General Carleton at Crown point, effectually disappointed the great object of joining the two armies. The latter, as we have said, returning to Canada, and the former retreating from the White plains towards New York, gave us a favourable prospect of seeing a happy end put to this dangerous campaign. However, many causes have concurred in producing an unlucky reverse of fortune; the nature of the country, the uncommon fineness of weather, even to this day, and above all, the short enlistments, which gave the soldiery an opportunity of going home, tired as they were with the operations of an active summer. When General Howe retreated from the White plains, he halted his whole army on the North river, between Dobbs' ferry and Kingsbridge, where he remained for some time. Having effected so little of the great business that brought him here, and the season allowing time for it, most men were of opinion, that the next attempt would be, to get possession of Philadelphia, by a march through the Jerseys, whilst a fleet should be sent up the Delaware to facilitate the enterprise. To guard against such a manœuvre, General Washington crossed the North river, with all the battalions that had been raised to the westward of it, leaving General Lee with the eastern troops, to guard the pass of the Highlands on Hudson river. In this situation of things, Mr. Howe made a sudden attack on fort Washington, with the greater part of his army, and carried it with a considerable loss; here he made near three thousand of our men prisoners. By this event, it became unnecessary longer to hold fort Lee, (or fort Constitution, as it was formerly called) which is on the west side of North river, and nearly opposite to fort Washington. It had been therefore determined to abandon fort Lee, but before the stores could be all removed, the enemy came suddenly upon it, and the garrison retreated, leaving some of their baggage and stores behind. About this time, General Howe became possessed of a letter, (by the agency of some wicked person, who contrived to get it from the express,) written by General Washington to the board of war, in which he had given an exact account when the time of service of all our battalions would expire, and his apprehensions that the men would not reenlist without first going home, to see their families and friends. Pos-

sessed of this intelligence, the opportunity was carefully watched, and a vigorous impression actually made, at the very crisis, when our army in the Jerseys was reduced to three thousand men, by the retiring of numbers, and the sickness of others, and before militia could in this extensive country be brought up to supply their places; the enemy marched rapidly on through the Jerseys, whilst our feeble army was obliged to retreat from post to post, until it crossed the Delaware at Trenton, where about two thousand five hundred militia from Philadelphia, joined the general. Since General Howe's arrival on the borders of the Delaware, various manœuvers and stratagems have been practised to effect a passage over the river, but they have hitherto proved abortive. General Washington's small army is placed along the west side of Delaware, from above Cayell's ferry to within fourteen miles of Philadelphia, whilst the Gondolas, one frigate, and other armed vessels in the river, above the Chivaux de Frize, cover the passage of it. General Lee, who had crossed the North river with as many of the eastern troops as could be spared from the defence of the Highlands, either to join General Washington, or to act on the enemie's rear, as occasions might point out) was the other day unfortunately surprised, and made prisoner by a party of seventy light-horse, who found him in a house a few miles in the rear of his army, with his domestics only. This loss, though great, will in some degree be repaired for the present, by General Gates, who, we understand, has joined the army commanded by General Lee, and who, we have reason to think, has by this time effected a junction of his force with that of General Washington. As the militia are now marching from various quarters to reenforce the general, if the enemy do not quickly accomplish their wishes of possessing Philadelphia, we hope not only to save that city, but to see General Howe obliged to retreat as fast as he advanced through the Jerseys. General Clinton, with a fleet, in which 'tis said he carried eight thousand men, has gone from New York through the Sound, some suppose for Rhode Island, but his destination, or its consequences, we yet have no certainty of. Thus, gentlemen, we have given you a true detail of the progress and present state of our affairs, which, although not in so good a posture as they were two months ago, are by no means in so bad a way as the emissaries of the court of London will undoubtedly represent them to be. If the great land and sea force with which we have been attacked, be compared with the feeble state in which the commencement of this war found us, in respect to military stores of all kinds, soldiers, clothing, money, and regular force, the wonder will

rather be. that our enemies have made so little progress, not that they have made so much. All views of accommodation with Great Britain, but on principles of peace as independent states, and in a manner perfectly consistent with the treaties our commissioners may make with foreign states being totally at an end, since the declaration of independence and the embassy to the court of France, Congress have directed the raising of ninety-four battalions of infantry, with some cavalry, and we hear the levies are going on well in the different states; until they are collected the militia must curb the enemie's progress. The very considerable force that Great Britain has already in North America, the possibility of recruiting it here within their own quarters by force and fraud together, added to the reenforcements that may be sent from Europe, and the difficulty of finding funds in the present depressed state of American commerce, all conspire to prove incontestibly, that if France desires to preclude the possibility of North America being ever re-united with Great Britain, this is the favourable moment for establishing the glory, strength, and commercial greatness of the former kingdom, and the ruin of her ancient rival. A decided part now taken by the court of Versailles, and a vigorous enterprise in the war in union with North America, would with ease sacrifice the fleet and army of Great Britain, at this time chiefly collected about New York, and the inevitable consequence would be, the quick reduction of the British West India islands, already barred of all defence by the removal of their troops to this continent. For the reasons here assigned, gentlemen, you will readily discern, how all-important it is to the security of American independence, to urge France, and with her Spain, into the war as soon as may be; and, if it be possible, speedily to procure from the former the number of line of battle ships, you were desired in your instructions to obtain for us, the speedy arrival of which here, in the present state of things, might decide the contest at one stroke. We shall pay proper attention to what Mr. Deane writes about Doctor Williamson and Mr. Hopkins, and we think the ill treatment this country and Mr. Deane have received from these men, strongly suggest the necessity of invincible reserve with persons coming to France as Americans and friends to America, whom the most irrefragable proofs have not removed all doubt about. The British recall of their Mediterranean passes, is an object of great consequence, and may require much intercession with the court of France, to get settled on the best footing for the security of American commerce; but this subject has been already touched in your instructions on the 6th

article of the treaty, proposed to be made with France, as all affairs relative to commerce and remittances pass through another department. We beg leave to refer you to the secret committee, and Mr. Thomas Morris, their agent in France, for every information on these subjects. As the neighbourhood of Philadelphia had, by the enemies' movements become the seat of war, it was judged proper that Congress should adjourn to this town, where the public business may be attended to, with the undisturbed deliberation that its importace demands. The Congress was accordingly opened here on the 20th instant. As it is more than probable, that the conference with Lord Howe on Staten Island may be misrepresented, to the injury of these states, we do ourselves the pleasure, to enclose you an authenticated account of that whole business, which the possibility of Dr. Franklin's not arriving renders proper. This step was taken to unmask his lordship, and evince to the world, that he did not possess powers, which for the purposes of delusion and division, had been suggested. Mr. Deane's proposition of loan is accepted by Congress, and they have desired two millions sterling to be obtained, if possible. The necessity of keeping up the credit of our paper currency, and the variety of important uses that may be made of this money, have induced Congress to go so far, as to offer per cent; but this interest is heavy, and it is hoped, you may be able to do the business on much easier terms. The resolves of Congress on this subject, are enclosed, and your earliest attention to them is desired, that we may know as soon as possible, of this application. Another resolve, enclosed, will show you, that Congress approve of armed vessels being fitted out by you, on continental account, provided, the court of France dislike not the measure, and blank commissions for this purpose will be sent you by the next opportunity. Private ships of war, or privateers cannot be admitted where you are, because the securities necessary in such cases, to prevent irregular practices, cannot be given by the owners and commanders of such privateers. Another resolve of Congress, which we have the honour to enclose you, directs the conduct to be pursued with regard to Portugal. We have nothing further to add at present, but to request, that you will omit no good opportunity of informing us, how you succeed in your mission, what events take place in Europe, by which these states may be affected, and that you convey to us, in regular succession, some of the best London, French, and Dutch newspapers, with any valuable political publications, that may concern North America. We have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem, &c.

P. S. The American captures of British vessels, at sea, have not been less numerous, or less valuable, than before Doctor Franklin left us. The value of these captures has been estimated at two millions.

BALTIMORE, December 30, 1776.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN—You will be pleased to receive herewith, copies of our letter of the 21st instant, and of its enclosures, which we recommend to your attention; since that letter was written, General Washington having been reenforced by the troops lately commanded by General Lee, and by some corps of militia, crossed the Delaware, with two thousand five hundred men, and attacked a body of the enemy stationed at Trenton, with the success that you will see related in the enclosed handbill. We hope this blow will be followed by others that may leave the enemy not so much to boast of as they some days ago expected, and we had reason to apprehend. Upon mature deliberation of all circumstances, Congress deem the speedy declaration of France, and European assistance, so indispensably necessary to secure the independence of these states, that they have authorized you to make such tenders to France and Spain as, they hope, will prevent any longer delay of an event that is judged so essential to the well being of North America. Your wisdom, we know, will direct you to make such use of these powers as will procure the thing desired, on terms as much short of the concessions now offered as possible; but no advantages of this kind are proposed to be contemplated, at the risk of a delay that may prove dangerous to the end in view. It must be very obvious to the court of France, that if Great Britain should succeed in her design of subjugating these states, that their inhabitants, now well trained to the use of arms, might be compelled to become instruments for making conquest of the French possessions in the West Indies, which would be a sad reverse of that security and commercial benefit that would result to France from the independence of North America. By some accident, in removing the papers from Philadelphia to this place, the secretary of Congress has mislaid the additional instruction,

formerly given you, by which you were empowered to negotiate with other courts than France. We think it necessary to mention this to you, lest the paper should get into wrong hands; and, because we wish to have a copy sent us by the first good opportunity. We observe that Mr. Deane sent his despatches, for this committee, open, to Mr. Bingham; but, though we have a good opinion of that gentleman, yet we think him rather too young to be made acquainted with the business passing between you and us, and, therefore, wish this may not be done in cases of much importance. The next opportunity will bring you the determination of Congress concerning the persons that are to be sent to the courts of Vienna, Prussia, Spain, and the grand duke of Tuscany. In the mean time, it is hoped, that, through the medium of the ambassadors from those courts to that of France, you may be able to procure their friendly mediation for the purposes proposed by Congress. One of our continental armed vessels, of fourteen guns, lately met with a king's sloop of war of twelve guns, and, after a smart engagement, the sloop was brought into the Delaware. In our last, we say, the prisoners made by the enemy at Fort Washington, were near three thousand, but the number is fixt at two thousand six hundred. and the number of West Indiamen taken by our cruizers, amounts to two hundred and fifty. Wishing you health and success, we remain, honourable gentlemen, &c.

BALTIMORE, (Maryland,) February 19, 1777.

Honourable Gentlemen—The events of war have not, since our last, furnished any thing decisive. The enemy's army still remains encamped upon the hills near Brunswick, and still our troops continue to beat back and destroy their convoys; insomuch, that, we understand, their horses die in numbers; and, we have reason to believe, that the difficulty of removing their stores, cannon, &c. will be insuperably great, until the opening of the Rariton furnishes a passage by water for their return to New York. The American army is not numerous at present, but the new levies are collecting as fast as possible, and we hope to have a sufficient force early in the field. We see by the speech of the king of

Great Britain to his Parliament, that much money will be called for; no doubt, to prosecute the war with unrelenting vigour. That we shall oppose with all our power, is certain, but the event must be doubtful until France shall take a decided part in the war. When that happens, our liberties will be secured, and the glory and greatness of France be placed on the most solid foundation. What may be the consequence of her delay must be a painful consideration to every friend of that country and of this. Thus viewing our situation, we are sure it will occasion your strongest exertions to procure an event of such momentous consequence to your country. It is in vain for us to have on hand a great abundance of tobacco, rice, indigo, flour, and other valuable articles of merchandise, if prevented from exporting them by having the whole naval power of Great Britain to contend against. It is not only for our interest, but clearly so for the benefit of Europe in general, that we should not be hindered from freely transmitting our products, that abound here, and are so much wanted there. Why should the avarice and ambition of Great Britain be gratified to the excessive injury of other nations? We feel sensibly the disagreeable situation Mr. Deane must have been in, from early in June to the date of his letter, in October; but this was occasioned by accident, not neglect, of writing, since letters were sent to him in all the intervening months, which must have unluckily fallen into the enemies' hands, or been destroyed. Mr. Bingham informs us, from Martinique, that he learned from a Spanish general there, on his way to South America, that the king of Spain was willing to do the United States offices of friendship, and that a loan of money might be obtained from that court. As the power sent you for borrowing is not confined to place, we mention this intelligence that you may avail yourselves of his Catholic majesty's friendly designs. Perhaps a loan can be obtained there on better terms than elsewhere. Mr. Deane recommends sending frigates to France, and to convoy our merchandise; but it should be considered that we are young in the business of fitting ships of war; that founderies for cannon were all to be erected, and the difficulty of getting seamen quickly, when privateers abound as they do from the states where sailors are chiefly to be met with; and lastly, that our frigates are much restrained by the heavy ships of the enemy which are placed at the entrance of our bays; in short, the attention of Great Britain must in part be drawn from here before France can benefit largely by our commerce. We expect it will not be long before Congress will appoint commissioners to

the courts formerly mentioned; and, in the mean time, you will serve the cause of your country, in the best manner possible, with the ministers from those courts to that of Versailles. Earnestly wishing for good news, and quickly, from you, we remain, with friendship and esteem, honourable gentlemen, your most obedient humble servants.

P. S. Congress adjourns this week back to Philadelphia.

NUMBER IX.

FISHKILL, the 23d of May, 1778.

SIR—Although I have but the honour of a short acquaintance with you, being upon the eve of my departure from this country, I take the liberty of troubling you with a few lines. After having complied with all the orders of Congress, I was sent back to Albany, in the latter end of last month. I then represented to General Washington, to the board of war, and to the president of Congress, that I being a French officer, and the most advanced in rank in the French army, (in spite of the stories and false pretensions of Mr. Kalb,) of all the French officers who came over, I could not think of being idle in a town, while others were fighting, that this was neither becoming my character, nor consistent with my principles: I therefore requested to be put in the way of action, and if any services were not thought necessary, I expected that Congress would give me such a certificate, as might justify me in returning to France, at the opening of the campaign. In answer to this pressing demand of mine, Congress resolved to accept of my resignation; but I did not hear a word about the certificate to which I am entitled. I do not blame the Congress at large for this extraordinary usage. I am told that it has been the effect of a cabal prejudiced against me. I do not meddle with any cabal, but whatever might be the influence of my unknown enemies in Congress, I expect that in your dispassionate view, Congress will consider that I have served with zeal and honour, that I have been invited, solicited, and sent over, by Mr. Silas Deane, that I was detained by Congress, that I have complied with all orders directed to me, that if my desire of serving in the field, of being in the way of action, is not agreeable, I ought to be dischaged in a manner becoming the dignity of Congress, as an officer called for by your agent, and who bears an honourable rank in the army of the power allied with the United States. This, sir, I have mentioned to President Laurens, and as I set a value upon your esteem, I thought it would not be improper to let you know, that when a number of French officers, (or who are said to be so,) are devouring the pay and rations of the continent far from the army, I was discarded

from the army, because I strenuously applied for being employed in the field; it is the first instance, I believe, of such an application being reckoned criminal. I am, with much regard, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS CONWAY.

Col. Richard Henry Lee.

CAMP AT WHITE PLAINS, August 17th, 1778.

Sir—I received both letters you honoured me with, dated 15th of February, and 23d of March, last past, but rather late, the first came to hand the 20th of May, and the second in June. A long sickness, the march of the army when I was yet very unwell, and a good deal of business since my recovery, have prevented me from answering before now. You are much in the right, sir, to think that the change in political matters, must place your independence beyond all doubt, and far beyond the power of England to disturb; I heartily rejoice with you and all true Americans, on the occasion. It is to be expected, also, the alliance with France and the real assistance the king intends to the states, must needs procure you a speedy and lasting peace. This day I wrote to President Laurens, in favour of Mons. le Vicomte de Mauray and Mons. le Chev. de Fayolles, which will be laid before the supreme council of the states. I need not to trouble you with the contents of it. I will only observe to you, that I am ordered to do the same by Marshal Duke de Broglie, and the count, his brother, and as they expect my answer, on that account, I should be greatly obliged to you, if you would be pleased to let me have the reasons for, or against, as the matter will be debated in Congress, and to be very particular in that respect. Though I ardently wish Mons. de Mauray's request be granted, yet I am afraid it will not, by reason of a letter he wrote, as I understood, to Congress, not very acceptable. If he is refused on that account, I should be glad to have it mentioned, because I think his noble protectors, are unacquainted with this piece of bad policy of his. I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

The Baron de KALB.

Col. Richard Henry Lee, Delegate in Congress.

WILMINGTON, August 13, 1778.

SIR—I am arrived here these two days, with all the cavalry, and expecting the infantry in four, will present myself with my corps to the Congress, to pass the review in the end of this month, and pursue the enemy immediately after. I should have been very glad to be ready sooner; but I hope every body shall be persuaded, that it is not the business of one day, to raise and form a corps. However, I heard the honourable Congress don't seem to be much satisfied with my application: I can't guess what may be the reason of it, for I always did all in my power to prove to them, that honour, and a true desire of distinguishing myself in defence of liberty, was always the only motive which fired my breast, for the cause of the United States. I do trust myself enough in your knowledge, to be in hopes, that you'll be kind enough to support me against the false preventions which might have been made against me. I am, with respect, sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

C. PULASKI.

Hon. Colonel LEE, Esq.

P. S. Captain Baldesqui, paymaster of my legion, who will deliver you my letter, is acquainted with all the particulars of the legion's business; you may know any thing from him.

BRISTOL, Sept. 16, 1777.

SIR—I am unable to tell you, with how much reluctance and even sorrow, I must acquaint you, that I cannot accept of the honour Congress intended to me, for the various reasons I explained to you, sir, to several members of Congress, but more particularly to Mr. Lovell, and which I repeat to Mr. Secretary Thomson, they are all of great weight with me. I beseech you, dear sir, to lay before Congress, that I have, and always shall retain the highest sense of thankfulness and veneration, for the whole of so respectable a body of men, and for each of the members in particular. My most sincere vows will ever be, for success to all their measures and undertakings, and for the general welfare and happiness of your states. I will never forget the private obligations I owe to several of your gentlemen, but especially to your

kindness to me. I never will be happier than when I shall hear from you, or when I shall be able to convince you of the esteem and respect, with which I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

THE BARON DE KALB.

The Hon. Colonel Richard Henry Lee,
Philadelphia.

NUMBER X.

Letter from the Count De Grasse, to Richard Henry Lee.

Je m'empresse, Monsieur, de vous faire passer toutes les expressions de ma reconnoissance. tout au sujet des choses flatteuses et obligeantes que vous vouléz bien me dire dans la lettre dont vous m'avéz honoré, qu'au sujet des differentes provisions, et rafraichissements que vous avez eu la bonte de m'envoyer. Faites moi je vous prie l'amitie de croire que mon plus grand regret en quittant ces parages, sera de n'avoir pas êté assez heureux pour vous faire mes remesciments de vive voix et faire avec vous, une connaissance personnelle et particuliere. Chargéz vous, si'l vous plait, Monsieur, de presenter les temoignages de ma gratitude à ceux de vos compatriotes qui eut bien vouleé contribuer à la marque d'amitié que vous m'avez donné, et croyez que la reconnaissance que j'en conserverai sera aussi durable que l'attachement sincere avec lequel j'ai l'honeur d'étre,

Monsieur,
Votre tres humble et tres obeissante serviteur,
LE COMTE DE GRASSE.

Abord de la Ville de Paris,
le Jy 8vre. 1781.

[TRANSLATION.]

I hasten, Sir, to transmit you every expression of thankfulness, as well for the flattering and obliging expressions you have been pleased to use in the letter with which you honoured me, as for the variety of provisions and refreshments, which you have had the goodness to send me. Do me the favour, I entreat you, to believe, that my greatest regret at quitting this country, will be, the not having been so happy as to have returned you my thanks in person, and to have made a personal and particular acquaintance with you. Be pleased, Sir, to testify my gratitude to those of your country-

men, who have been so good as to contribute to the proof of regard which you have given me; and be assured, Sir, that my gratitude will be as durable as the sincere attachment, with which I have the honour to be,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

END OF VOL. I.

MEMOIR

OF

THE LIFE

OF

RICHARD HENRY LEE,

AND

HIS CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED MEN IN AMERICA AND EUROPE.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THEIR CHARACTERS,

AND OF THE

EVENTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY HIS GRANDSON

RICHARD H. LEE,

OF LEESBURG, VIRGINIA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

H. C. CAREY AND I. LEA, CHESNUT STREET.

William Brown, Printer.

1825.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

****
* SEAL. *
****

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixth day of September, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A.D. 1825, H. C. CAREY & I. LEA, of the said District, have deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence with the most distinguished Men in America and Europe, illustrative of their Characters, and of the Events of the American Revolution.—By his Grandson, Richard H. Lee, of Leesburg, Virginia. In two volumes. Vol II."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CORRESPONDENCE,

BETWEEN

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON

AND

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, July 10, 1775.

Dear Sir—I was exceeding glad to receive a letter from you, as I always shall be whenever it is convenient, though perhaps my hurry, till such time as matters are drawn a little out of the chaos they appear in at present, will not suffer me to write you such full and satisfactory answers, or give such clear, and precise accounts of our situation and views, as I could wish, or you might expect. After a journey, a good deal retarded, principally by the desire of the different townships through which I travelled, and of showing respect to the general of your armies, I arrived here on this day week; since which I have been labouring with as much assiduity by fair, and threatening means, to obtain returns of our strength in this camp and Roxbury, and their dependences as a man could do, and never have been able to accomplish the matter till this day; now, I will not answer for the correctness of them, although I have sent several of the regimental returns back more than once, to have mistakes rectified. I do not doubt but the Congress will think me very remiss in not writing to them sooner, but you may rely on it yourself, and I beg you to assure them, that it has never been in my power till this day, to comply with their orders. Could I have conceived, that, that which ought, and in a regular army, would have been done in an hour, would employ

eight days, I should have sent an express on the second morning after I arrived, with a general account of things, but expecting in the morning to receive the returns in the evening, and in the evening surely to find them in the morning, (and at last getting them full of imperfections,) I have been drilled on from day to day, till I am ashamed to look back at the time which has elapsed since my arrival here. You will perceive by the returns, that we have but about 16,000 effective men in all this department, whereas, by the accounts which I received from even the first officers in command, I had no doubt of finding between 18 and 20,000; out of these there are only 14,000 fit for duty. So soon as I was able to get this state of the army, and came to the knowledge of our weakness, I immediately summoned a council of war, the result of which you will see, as it is enclosed to the Congress. Between you and me, I think we are in an exceeding dangerous situation. as our numbers are not much larger than we suppose, from the best accounts we are able to get, those of the enemy to be: their's situated in such a manner as to be drawn to any point of attack, without our having an hour's previous notice of it, (if the general will keep his own counsel,) whereas we are obliged to be guarded at all points, and know not where, with precision, to look for them. I should not, I think, have made choice of the present posts, in the first instance, although I believe, the communication between the town and country, could not have been so well cut off without; but, as much labour has been bestowed in throwing up lines, making redoubts, &c.; as Cambridge, Roxbury, and Watertown, must be immediately exposed to the mercy of the enemy, were we to retreat a little further in the country; as it would give a general dissatisfaction to this colony, dispirit our own people, and encourage the enemy to remove at this time to another place, we have for these reasons resolved in council, to maintain our ground if we can. Our lines on Winter and Prospect Hills, and those of the enemy on Bunker Hill, are in full view of each other, a mile distant, our advance guards much nearer, and the centries almost near enough to converse; at Roxbury and Boston neck it is the same. Between these, we are obliged to guard several of the places at which the enemy may land. The enemy have strongly fortified, or will in a few days, their camps and Bunker Hill; after which—and when their new landed troops have got a little refreshed, we shall look for a visit, if they mean, as we are told they do, to come out of their lines. Their great command of artillery, and adequate stores of powder, &c.

give them advantages which we have only to lament the want of. The abuses in this army, I fear, are considerable, and the new modelling of it, in the face of an enemy, from whom we every hour expect an attack, exceedingly difficult and dangerous; if things, therefore, should not turn out as the Congress would wish, I hope they will make proper allowances. I can only promise and assure them, that my whole time is devoted to their service, and that, as far as my judgment goes, they shall have no cause to complain. I need not tell you that this letter is written in much haste, the fact will sufficiently appear from the face of it; I thought a hasty letter would please you better than no letter, and, therefore, I shall offer no further apology, but assure you, that, with sincere regard, for my fellow labourers with you, Doctor Shippen's family, &c. I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. We want an hospital upon a proper establishment, much, and a proper director, with good surgeons to take care and charge of it. I cannot learn that these are to be provided here; it, therefore, rests with the Congress to consider of this matter. A Mr. Bass of Philadelphia, who, I am told, was in this way last war, can give you the proper establishment of one; I would not wish to see an expensive one set on foot, and I have no doubt of Doctor Shippen's recommending such gentlemen for surgeons as he can answer for the abilities of. Whether there is no news stirring, or whether we live out of the way of receiving it, I cannot tell, but so it is, that I have heard nothing of what the Parliament or ministry are about, since I left Philadelphia.

I am, as before, your serv't. G. W.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, August 29th, 1775.

Dear Sir—Your favour of the first instant, by Mr. Randolph, came safe to hand; the merits of this young gentleman, added to your recommendation, and my own knowledge of his character, induced me to take him into my family, as an aid-de-camp, in the room of Mr. Mifflin, who I have appointed quartermaster general, from a thorough persuasion of his integrity; my own experience of his activity; and, finally, because he stands unconnected with either of these governments; or with this, that, or t'other man; for, be-

tween you and me, there is more in this than you can easily imagine.

I submit it, therefore, to your consideration, whether there is, or is not, a propriety in that resolution of the Congress, which leaves the ultimate appointment of all officers below the rank of generals, to the governments where the regiments originated, now the army is become continental? To me it appears improper, in two points of view; first, it is giving that power and weight to an individual colony, which ought, of right, to belong only to the whole; and next, it damps the spirit and ardour of volunteers, from all but the four New England governments, as none but their people have the least chance of getting into office; would it not be better, therefore, to have the warrants which the commander in chief is authorized to give pro. tempore, approved or disapproved, by the Continental Congress, or a committee of their body, which I should suppose, in any long recess, must always sit. In this case every gentleman will stand an equal chance of being promoted, according to his merit; in the other, all offices will be confined to the inhabitants of the four New England governments, which, in my opinion, is impolitic to a degree.

I have not been unmindful of that part of your letter respecting Point Alderton; before the receipt of it, it had became an object of my particular inquiry, but the accounts of its situation differ exceedingly, in respect to the command it has of the ship channel; but my knowledge of this matter would not have been confined to inquiries only, if I had ever been in a condition, since my arrival here, to have taken possession of such a post; but you well know, my good sir, that it becomes the duty of an officer to consider some other matters, as well as a situation, namely—What number of men are necessary to defend a place—how it can be supported—and how furnished with ammunition. In respect to the first, I conceive our defence of this place (Point Alderton) must be proportioned to the attack of general Gage's whole force, leaving him just enough to man his lines on Boston and Charles Town Necks; and with regard to the second, and most important, as well as alarming object, we have only one hundred and eighty-four barrels of powder in all, (including the late supply from Philadelphia,) which is not sufficient to give twenty-five musket cartridges to each man, and scarcely to serve the artillery in any brisk action, one single day. Under these circumstances, I dare say, you will agree with me, that it would not be very

eligible to take a post thirty miles distant (by land) from this place, when we have already a line of circumvallation round Boston, of at least ten miles in extent, to defend; any part of which may be attacked, without our having (if the enemy will keep their own counsel) an hour's previous notice of it; and that, it would not be prudent in me to attempt a measure which would necessarily bring on a consumption of all the ammunition we have, thereby leaving the army at the mercy of the enemy, or to disperse; and the country to be ravaged and laid waste at discretion; to you, sir, I may account for my conduct, but I cannot declare the motives of it to every one, notwithstanding I know, by not doing of it, that I shall stand in a very unfavourable light in the opinion of those who expect much, and will find little done, without understanding, or, perhaps, giving themselves the trouble of inquiring, into the cause. Such, however, is the fate of all those who are obliged to act the part I do; I must, therefore, submit to it, under a consciousness of having done my duty to the best of my abilities.

On Saturday night last, we took possession of a hill, advanced of our lines, and within point blank shot of the enemy, on Charles Town Neck. We worked incessantly the whole night, 1200 men, and, before morning, got an intrenchment in such forwardness as to bid defiance to their cannon; about nine o'clock, on Sunday, they began a heavy cannonade, which continued through the day, without any injury to our work, and with the loss of four men only; two of which were killed through their own folly. The insult of the cannonade, however, we were obliged to submit to with impunity, not daring to make use of artillery on account of the consumption of powder, except with one nine pounder, placed on a point, with which we silenced, and, indeed, sunk, one of their floating batteries. This move of ours was made, to prevent the enemy from gaining this hill, and, we thought, was giving them a fair challenge to dispute it (as we had been told by various people who had just left Boston, that they were preparing to come out,) but, instead of accepting of it, we learn that it has thrown them into great consternation, which might be improved if . . . . . the means of doing it. Yesterday afternoon, they began a bombardment, without any effect, as yet. As I expect this letter will meet you in Philadelphia, I must request the favour of you to present my affectionate and respectful compliments to Doctor Shippen, his lady and family, my

brothers' of the delegation, and any other inquiring friends; and, at the same time, do me the justice to believe that I am, with a sincere regard,

Your affectionate friend and ob't serv't.

GEO : WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 29th October, 1775.

DEAR SIR—As you will be fully informed of every matter and thing relative to the army, by your own committee, I should not have given you the trouble of a letter at this time, were it not on Colonel Reed's account. He is, as I presume you may have heard, concerned in many of the principal causes now depending in the courts of Pennsylvania, and should those causes be pressed for trial by his brethren of the profession, it will not only do him a manifest injury in his practice and future prospects, but afford room for complaint, of his having neglected his business as a lawyer; this, he thinks, may be avoided, if some of you gentlemen of the Congress, in the course of conversation with the chief justice and others, would represent the disadvantages which must result to him, in case his causes should be hurried to trial. That Colonel Reed is clever in his business and useful to me, is too apparent to mention. I should do equal injustice, therefore, to his abilities and merit, were I not to add that his services here are too important to be lost, and, that I could wish to have him considered in this point of view, by your honourable body, when occasion shall favour. I shall take it kind of you, to give me, from time to time, such authentic intelligence of the manœuvres of ministry, as you think may be relied on. We get none but newspaper accounts here, and these very imperfect. I am, with sincere esteem and regard,

Dear Sir, your affectionate friend and countryman,

GEO : WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 8th November, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I mean but to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favour of the 22d ult. for as I expect this letter will be handed to you in Philadelphia, to recite the contents of my letter to the Congress, would be little more than idle repetition. I should be very glad, if the Congress would,

without delay, appoint some, mode by which an examination into the captures made by our armed vessels may be had, as we are rather groping in the dark till this happens. I sincerely condole with you on the loss of our good old speaker, and with respectful compliments to the good family you are in, your brother, &c. I remain, dear sir,

Your most affectionate humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Tell Doctor B. Shippen, that I was in hopes that his business would have permitted him to come here director of the hospital. Advices from England would be very agreeable—we have none here. G. W.

CAMBRIDGE, 27th November, 1775.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 13th, with the enclosures, (for which I thank you) came to this place on Wednesday evening; part of which, that is, the night, I was engaged with a party of men throwing up a work upon a hill, called Cobble Hill, which, in case we should ever be supplied with such things as we want, may prove useful to us, and could not be delayed, as the earth here is getting as hard as a rock; this, and the early departure of the post, prevented my giving your letter an answer the next morning.

In answer to your inquiries respecting armed vessels, there are none of any tolerable force belonging to this government. I know of but two of any kind—those very small. At the continental expense, I have fitted out six, per the enclosed list, two of which are upon the cruise, directed by Congress; the rest ply about capes Cod and Ann—as yet to very little purpose. These vessels are all manned by officers and soldiers (except perhaps a master, pilots, &c.); but how far, as they are upon the old establishment, which has not more than a month to exist, they can be ordered off this station, I will not undertake to say, but suppose they might be engaged anew. Belonging to Providence, there are two armed vessels: and I am told Connecticut has one, which, with one of those from Providence, is, I believe, upon the cruise you have directed.

I have no idea that the troops can remove from Boston this winter, to a place where no provision is made for them; however, we shall keep the best look out we can; and upon that, and every occasion where practicable, give them the

best we have. But their situation in Boston gives them but little to apprehend, from a parting blow, whilst their ships can move, and floating batteries surround the town.

Nothing of importance hath happened since my last. I am glad to find that our noble secretary has, at length, met with a check—was one of our bullets aimed for him, the world would be happily rid of a monster without any person sustaining a loss; this is my opinion at least. It gives me great pleasure to hear, that the Ohio Indians have entered into a firm treaty of friendship with us; for I had been informed that they were very restless, and had destroyed the houses, &c. upon the Great Kanhawa: and that the improvements which I had been making there to save my lands, valued at 1568*l.* 18*s.* 7½*d.*, were all destroyed—as far as they could be so by fire. The last I believe to be true, as I have it from Mr. L. Washington, who lives with me, (by the last post,) and who adds, that the Indians had also destroyed the fort which was built last year at the mouth of the Great Kanhawa. For God's sake, hurry the signers of money, that our wants may be supplied. It is a very singular case, that their signing cannot keep pace with our demands. I heartily congratulate you and the Congress on the reduction of St. John's: I hope all Canada is in our possession before this. No accounts from Arnold since those mentioned in my last letter to the Congress. Would it not be political to invite them to send members to Congress? Would it not be also political to raise a regiment or two of Canadians, and bring them out of the country? They are good troops, and this would be entering them heartily in the cause. My best regards to the good families you are with. I am very affectionately,

Your obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 26th December, 1775.

Dear Sir—Your favour of the 6th instant, did not reach this place till Saturday afternoon. The money which accompanied it, came seasonably, but not (as it was so long delayed) in quantum sufficit; our demands at this time being peculiarly great for pay, and advance to the troops—pay for their arms—blanketing, &c.; independent of the demands of the commissary, and quartermaster general. Lord Dunmore's letters to General Howe, &c., which very fortunately fell into my hands, and enclosed by me to Congress, will let you

pretty fully into his diabolical schemes. If, my dear sir, that man is not crushed before spring, he will become the most formidable enemy America has; his strength will increase as a snow ball, by rolling: and faster, if some expedient cannot be hit upon, to convince the slaves and servants, of the impotency of his designs. You will see by his letters, what pains he is taking to invite a reinforcement at all events there, and to transplant the war to the southern colonies. I do not think that forcing his lordship on shipboard, is sufficient; nothing less than depriving him of life or liberty, will secure peace to Virginia; as motives of resentment actuate his conduct, to a degree equal to the total destruction of the colony. I fear the destination of the naval armament at P——, is too well known to answer the design. I have heard it spoken of in common conversation, at this place, near a fortnight ago; and the other day was told, that two men of war, going into the harbour of New York, (supposed to be those intended for the relief of the Asia,) were ordered, and accordingly sailed immediately out, and as it is imagined, for Virginia. My letters to Congress will give you the occurrences of this place; I need not repeat them, but I must beg of you, my good sir, to use your influence in having a court of admiralty, or some power appointed, to hear and determine all matters relative to captures; you cannot conceive how I am plagued on this head, and how impossible it is for me to hear and determine upon matters of this sort, when the facts, perhaps, are only to be ascertained at ports, 40, 50, or more miles distant, without bringing the parties here at great trouble and expense: at any rate my time will not allow me to be a competent judge of this business. I must also beg the favour of you, to urge the necessity of appointing a brigadier general to the vacant brigade in this army, the inconvenience we daily experience for want of one, is very great; much more than the want of a colonel to a regiment, for then the next officer in command does the duty; in a brigade this may not with propriety happen, and seldom or never is done with any kind of regularity. Perfectly indifferent is it to me whom the Congress shall please to appoint to these offices, I only want it done, that business may go regularly on.

I thank you for the letter enclosed (from Col. Pendleton), but the gentlemen were so long on the road, that I had more particular accounts of the transactions in Virginia before it came to hand.

My best respects to the good family you are in, and to

your brothers of the delegation, and be assured, that I am, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

When will the expresses between Philadelphia and this camp be established? Is it expected that letters to and from me, by the continental post are to pay postage? The information respecting Connelly's instructions being concealed in the tree of his saddle, may be relied on; it came to me from Mr. Atkinson, the midshipman who commanded the sloop coming to Boston and taken by us, and who was eye witness to the device, which he says was so well done, that he should not have been able to have discovered the place himself, wherein the instructions were secreted, without pulling the whole to pieces; he wishes that no use may be made of his name. I believe the intelligence was rather inadvertently communicated by Atkinson to Captain Matthews, who acquainted me of it yesterday.

CAMBRIDGE, 4th April, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 26th ult. came to my hands last night, by the post; but as I am upon the point of setting out for New York, (by the way of Providence and Norwich,) I can do little more than acknowledge the receipt of it, and thank you for the proceedings and ordinances of the Virginia Convention, which came safely to hand.

At present, the lakes are in an impassable state, neither being clear of ice, nor covered with such as will admit of transportation; at present, also, our troops are at different stages, on their march from hence to New York; nor is it possible for me, till I get there, as the Congress have annexed conditions to my sending the four battalions to Canada, to tell whether they can be spared or not, as I am unacquainted with the number of men, or strength of the works at that place. No time shall be lost in forwarding three battalions if there is a possibility of doing it with safety; as no person can be more sensible of the importance of securing Canada than I am. A letter of the 27th ult. from General Schuyler, informs me that there are many men now stopped at Albany, on account of the state the ice is in on the lakes. I thank you for your friendly congratulations on the retreat of the king's troops from Boston. It was really a flight: their embarkation was so precipitate; their loading so confused (after making greater havoc of the king's stores

than Dunbar did upon Braddock's defeat, which made so much noise,) that it took them eleven days to fit their transports, adjust the loads of them, and take in water from the islands in Nantasket Road, after they had fallen down there. The coast is now clear of them, except the Renown, (a 50 gun ship,) and one or two frigates, which remain here for the protection of such transports as shall be bound to this port. I pray you to make my best wishes acceptable to the good doctor, his lady, and family, &c. and believe me to be, as I really am,

Dear Sir, your affectionate and ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, May 18th, 1776.

My dear Sir—In great haste I write you a few lines to cover the enclosed; they came in the manner you see them, and as explained in Captain Langdon's letter to me. I hesitated some time in determining whether I could, with propriety, select them from the rest, considering in what manner they came to my hands; but as there are some things in each, which may serve to irritate, I concluded it best to send not only the one directed to you, but the other also, (to Doctor Franklin,) under cover to you, as you may communicate and secrete such parts as you like. I have no time to add the necessity of vigorous exertions; they are too obvious to need any stimulus from me. Adieu, my dear Sir.

I am, most affectionately, your ob't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Upon second thought, knowing that Doctor Franklin is in Canada, I send you a copy only of the letter to him, (which I take to be from Doctor Lee,) and the original to the Doctor.

MORRISTOWN, January 10th, 1777.

My dear Sir—Your last favour, by the purport of it, (having no date,) as also one or two others, at different periods, have come safe to my hands; and went unacknowledged from the hurried and distressed state of our affairs, and from the knowledge I had, that every occurrence, worth noticing, came regularly to you, in my letters to Congress.

I thank you, Sir, for the mention of Colonel Heartley, and finding, upon inquiry, that he is worthy of a regiment. I have sent him orders to raise one immediately. I shall, also, enclose Woffendall Kendall's letter to some officer to the southward, that his merit and services may not go unnoticed. My letters to Congress, containing every thing of a public nature that I could communicate in this, renders it unnecessary for me to add more than my compliments to our friends; my thanks for your kind wishes; and that I am, with affectionate regard,

Dear, Sir, your most ob't serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, March 6th, 1777.

Dear Sir—I am anxious to know whether General Arnold's non-promotion was owing to accident or design; and the cause of it. Surely a more active, a more spirited, and sensible officer, fills no department in your army. Not seeing him then in the list of major generals, and no mention made of him, has given me uneasiness, as it is not to be presumed (being the oldest brigadier) that he will continue in service under such a slight. I imagine you will lose two or three other very good officers, by promoting your's, or any one's, over them. My public letters will give you the state of matters in this quarter, and my anxiety to be informed of the reason of Arnold's non-promotion, gives you the trouble of this letter, being, very sincerely, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, April 24th, 1777.

Dear Sir—I have been favoured with two or three letters from you lately; the last that came to hand was without date, but contained an extract from Doctor Lee's letter to the secret committee, and the French general's ideas of the measures necessary for us to pursue in prosecuting the war with Great Britain: for both of which I sincerely thank you, as the communication of such matters cannot fail of having a proper tendency. That Great Britain will exert every nerve to carry her tyrannical designs into execution, I have not the smallest doubt; her very existence as a nation depends now upon her success: for should America rise triumphant in her struggle for independence, she must fall. It is not to be wondered at therefore, after she had departed from that

line of justice which ought to characterize a virtuous people, that she should descend to such low arts, and dirty tricks, as will forever remain a reproach to her; none of which has she practised with more success, and I fear with more dangerous consequences to our cause, than her endeavours to depreciate the continental bills of credit. Nothing therefore has a greater claim to the close attention of Congress, than the counteraction of this part of her diabolical scheme: every thing depends upon it.

The complexion of affairs in Europe, seems to indicate an approaching storm; but where, when, or on whom it may break, is not quite so clear, and ought not, in my judgment, to occasion the smallest relaxation in our preparations: for I profess myself to be of that class, who never built sanguinely upon the assistance of France, further than her winking at our supplies from thence for the benefits derived from our trade; and how far the meanness and offers of Great Britain may contravene this, time only can discover, and is somewhat to be feared. The plan drawn by the French general, is of such a nature, that it is impracticable to carry it into execution this campaign. It may, however, be kept in view, and the whole, or such parts of it adopted, as our circumstances, upon a full consideration of the matter, may hereafter admit. The great delay in appointing the general officers, the resignation of some of them, the non-acceptance of others, and I might add, the unfitness of a few, added to the amazing delay in assembling the troops, and the abuses which I am satisfied have been committed by the recruiting officers, (both of which ,consequences of the want of officers in that line, to superintend those duties in the respective states,) have distressed me and the service exceedingly; and will amply prove, what I foretold to Congress, that the pay of these officers, (for I could account for the delay of appointing them on no other principle) would be an ill-timed saving. Convinced I am, that thousands of pounds would have been saved to the public, if the measure had been adopted, upon, and at my first recommendation of it. But the extra expense is the smallest part of the evil. The backwardness we are in, in assembling the troops, is truly alarming; this however is not a singular instance, of our suffering by delay, in the adoption of measures, which were early recommended.

You are not aware of the evil consequences that would follow a general exemption of all persons concerned in iron works, from military duty; they are very numerous, and in this part of the country form a great majority of the people: besides, why should the iron-master carry on his trade with-

out restriction, when the farmer, equally useful for the support of the war, the shoemaker, and other manufacturers, absolutely necessary to the equipment of an army, may have their servants and apprentices taken from them at pleasure? One thing I have ever done, and it has, I believe, answered the end proposed by you; whenever an iron work has been employed *for the public*. I have desired the owner to give me a return of the number of men, and the names of those necessarily employed therein, and have exempted them from the duties of militia men in this state. This I have found necessary on two accounts: first, to secure such articles of manufacture as the army wanted; and next, to prevent numbers under this pretext from withholding their services in the military line, there being in this county (Morris) alone, between eighty and a hundred iron works, large and small.—Doctor Lee's opinion on the propriety of attacking the enemy upon their first arrival, (under a supposition of their being raw and undisciplined,) is certainly well founded, if our own circumstances will admit of it; but the doctor little apprehended, I believe, that we ourselves should have an army, at this late hour, to raise, of men equally raw, and officers probably much more so.

April 26.—Since writing the above, your favour of the 21st is come to hand, in consequence I send the enclosed; though I believe Baylor, and perhaps his corps of officers would as soon have had any other countryman among them as a S——n, not that I think this ought to be objected to him, if he is deserving in other respects. Please to make a tender of my compliments to your brother and other delegates from Virginia, and be assured, that I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. As General Arnold writes me that he is determined not to continue in service, (under the slight put upon him,) I could wish another brigadier was appointed for the state of Connecticut, (there being only one, Parsons,) and would recommend Colonel Huntington, who is the oldest colonel, a gentleman and a good officer, belonging to that state; as a piece of justice, and to prevent the loss of so good an officer, I could wish to see Arnold promoted to the rank of major general, and put in his proper place. It is by men of his activity and spirit the cause is to be supported, and not by H——h, Sp——b, &c.: out of all the brigadiers, appointed from Pennsylvania, I have not one to do duty. D.

Haas I cannot get up, or even an answer from him; Wayne is at Tyconderoga, but I have sent for him; the French general at Boston must take the third brigade of that state.

MORRISTOWN, May 10th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—This letter will be delivered to you, by the Chevalier Damremours, who, if I am not mistaken in my judgment, has something more in view than preferment. In the course of two days conversation with him, he appears to me, to be a man of superior abilities to the common run of his countrymen, who have visited us. He is sensible and judicious, and as far as I am capable of judging, well instructed in the political and commercial principles of most European states. He has letters of recommendation from Dr. Franklin, professes to be a warm friend to the rights of mankind, and, as such, ready to give any aid in his power to the cause we are engaged in. I mean this as a letter of introduction only, and am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate,
GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, May 17th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Under the privilege of friendship, I take the liberty to ask you, what Congress expects I am to do with the many foreigners they have at different times promoted to the rank of field officers? and by the last resolve, two to that of colonels. In making these appointments, it is much to be feared, that all the circumstances attending, are not taken into consideration. To oblige the adventurers of a nation which we want to interest in our cause, may be one inducement; and to get rid of their importunity, another; but this is viewing the matter by halves, or on one side only. These men have no attachment or ties to the country, further than interest binds them; they have no influence, and are ignorant of the language they are to receive and give orders in; consequently, great trouble, or much confusion, must follow. But this is not the worst, they have not the smallest chance to recruit others; and our officers think it exceedingly hard, after they have toiled in this service, and probably have sustained many losses, to have strangers put over them, whose merit, perhaps, is not equal to their own, but whose effrontery will take no denial.

The management of this matter, give me leave to add sir,

is a delicate point; for although no one will dispute the right of Congress to make appointments, every person will assume the privilege of judging of the propriety of them; and good policy, in my opinion, forbids the disgusting a whole corps to gratify the pride of an individual: for it is by the zeal and activity of our own people, that the cause must be supported, and not by a few hungry adventurers. Besides, the error of these appointments, is now clear and manifest, and the views of Congress evidently defeated; for by giving high rank to people of no reputation or service, you have disgusted their own countrymen; or, in other words, raised their expectations to an insatiable pitch. For the man who was a captain in France, finding another who was only a subaltern there, or perhaps nothing, appointed to a majority with us, extends his views instantly to a regiment; in like manner, the field officer can accept of nothing less than a brigade, and so on, by which means the man of real rank and merit, must be excluded, or perhaps your whole military system disordered. In the mean while I am haunted and teazed to death by the importunity of some, and dissatisfaction of others. My ideas, in this representation, does not extend to artillery officers and engineers. The first of these will be useful, if they do not break in upon the arrangement of that corps already established by order of Congress: the second are absolutely necessary and not to be had here. But proper precaution should be observed in the choice of them, for we have at present in pay, and high rank, two (Frenchmen,) who, in my judgment, know nothing of the duty of engineers. Gentlemen of this profession ought to produce sufficient and authentic testimonials of their skill and knowledge, and not expect that a pompous narrative of services, and loss of papers, (the usual excuse) can be a proper introduction into our army. The freedom, with which I have delivered my sentiments on this subject, will, I am persuaded, meet your excuse, when I assure you, that I have nothing else in view, than the good of the service. By the time, or before this letter can reach you, Congress will be visited by a person who *calls himself* Colonel Michael Fabricy a Kovatz, who according to his *own account* is a most valuable officer, from Prussia. What his credentials are, I know not, but from what little I have seen of him, they ought to be strong to convince me of his real importance, for if his conversations have been faithfully interpreted he has been caught tripping several times. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 22d May, 1777.

Dear General—The subject of your letter of the 17th, is a very important one; and whilst it deserves the greatest attention, is certainly involved in great difficulty; of one truth, however, I beg you, sir, to be convinced, that no desire *to get rid of importunity* has occasioned these appointments, but motives military and political merely. These adventurers may be divided into three classes; some who came early, and without recommendation, but apparent zeal, with commissions, showing that they had been in service; others that brought with them recommendations from our good friend the Count D'Argou, general of Martinique, and from Mr. Bingham, the continental agent in that island; a third class includes those who came from France, generally under agreement with our commissioners, or one of them at least. The strongest obligations rest upon us (though the inconvenience is great) to make good engagements with the latter, and if the second had been disregarded, we might have offended a good and powerful friend in Martinique, who has done many good offices there; or have brought our agent into disrepute. Among the first class, I really believe there are many worthless men, and I heartily wish we were rid of them. All this is true, and yet I feel the great force of your reasoning, and the many difficulties in the way of providing for them properly, and that may be tolerably agreeable to them. It is of some consequence that we all, in our several departments, endeavour to smooth this rugged business as much as possible. When General Conway was appointed, I did hope, that as he knew most of them, and spoke both French and English well, he might relieve you from the greater part of this difficulty, for really, the discontented importunity of the greater part of these gentlemen is too much to be borne.

I will prevail with the committee for foreign applications to furnish you with the most explicit views of Congress, in every appointment, as well as with the recommendations under which each appointment was, and is made. We have written both to France and to Martinique to stop the further flow of these gentlemen here, and after the letters arrive, I suppose we shall have no more. Many of the last class, are, I believe, men of real merit, and if they will learn to express themselves tolerably in English, may be of service to the army. The desire to obtain engineers, and artillerists, was the principal cause of our being so overburthened. The first that came, had sagacity enough, quickly to discern our wants, and professing competency in these branches, they

were too quickly believed; and when our commissioners abroad (in consequence of their instructions,) inquired for those artists, military speculation was immediately up, and recommendations were obtained from persons of so much consideration in France, that the success of our applications, then made it quite necessary not to neglect them; and at this moment I am apprehensive, that the discontent of many, may injure our cause abroad, when we would wish it to stand well. As you express it, sir, the affair requires great delicacy in its management, as well on the account of our own officers, as on that of these foreigners.

CAMP AT MIDDLEBROOK, June 1, 1777.

Dear Sir—By your favour of the 22d ultimo, I perceive my letter of the 17th, has been expressed in too strong terms. I did not mean by the words, "to get rid of importunity," to cast the smallest reflection; indeed the hurry with which I am obliged to write the few private letters I attempt, will not allow me to consider the force and tendency of my words; nor should I have been surprised, if the fact had really been so, if I am to judge of their, I mean foreigners' applications to Congress, by those to myself: for it is not one, nor twenty explanations, that will satisfy the cravings of these people's demands.

You will before this can reach you, have seen Monsieur D'Coudrey. What his real expectations are, and what his agreements with Mr. Dean, I know not; but I fear if his appointment is equal to what I have been told is his expectation. it will be attended with unhappy consequences. To say nothing of the policy of intrusting a department, on the due execution of which the salvation of the army depends, to a foreigner, who has no other tie to bind him to the interests of this country than honour, I would beg leave to observe, that by putting Monsieur D'Coudrey at the head of the artillery, you will lose a very valuable officer in General Knox, who is a man of great military reading, sound judgment, and clear conceptions. He has conducted the affairs of that department with honour to himself, and advantage to the public, and will resign if any one is put over him. My last return of the army will give you our strength, and show the state of the recruiting service, which seems to be at an end. The regiments of Pennsylvania indeed, appear to be growing worse, and unless some coercive method can be hit upon to complete the battalions, I see no chance of doing it. Gene-

ral Howe's encouragement, by proclamation, has occasioned great desertions from our army to his, with the loss of arms; this I have represented to Congress, and submitted to them the propriety of offering something back by way of counteraction, but have received no answer; and this being frequently the case, leaves me often in a very disagreeable state of suspense, from which a simple yea or nay, would relieve me.

If some effectual mode is not devised, to fill the regiments, it is impossible, at least very unlikely, that any effectual opposition can be given to the British army with the troops we have, whose numbers diminish more by desertion, than increase by enlistments. I have requested the director general of the hospital here (as it is properly within his line,) to take notice of the report, which you say prevails to the southward concerning the sick, and to remark upon it in the gazettes. I am with great regard and affection, dear sir,

Your most obedient,
GEO: WASHINGTON.

CHANTILLY, in Virginia, January 2, 1778.

Dear Sir—The enclosed came to my hand only a few days past, although from its date it appears to have been written long since; there are some useful suggestions in it, and therefore I send it to you. I do not know the writer's reason for dating it in April 1776, when from some parts in the body of the writing, it must have been written in the course of the year 1777. The arts of the enemies of America, are endless, but all, wicked as they are various; among other tricks, they have forged a pamphlet of letters, entitled letters from General Washington to several of his friends, in 1776, the design of the forger is evident, and no doubt it gained him a good beefsteak from his masters. I would send you this pamphlet, if it were not too bulky for the post, as it might serve to amuse your leisure hours during the inaction of winter. We hear, that Lord Cornwallis is gone to England, probably to encourage the hopes of administration, upon their sending out strong reinforcements in the spring. I am just informed from Williamsburgh, that the assembly have possessed the . . . . . and have voted two thousand men to be drafted from the single men, to fill up the regiments; also, ten regiments of volunteers to be quickly raised and marched to the army for six months. They have adopted a very extensive taxation, which will produce a large sum of money, and thereby produce the most salutary consequences. The

injury my health received at York, is not yet removed, but I hope to be in Williamsburg to assist in the Assembly, by the 12th or 14th of this month. I wish you the compliments of the season, and remain with true affection, dear sir,

Your's sincerely.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

VALLEY FORGE, February 15, 1778.

Dear Sir—Your letter of the 2d ultimo, from Chantilly, enclosing Lieutenant Colonel Frazer's orders for the management of the grenadiers and light infantry in an action, and upon a march, came to my hands in the course of last month, and merits my thanks, as it may be of use to such corps, one of which (consisting of light infantry) we are now forming. The enemy are governed by no principles that ought to actuate honest men; no wonder then, that forgery should be amongst their other crimes. I have seen a letter published in a handbill at New York, and extracts of it republished in the Philadelphia paper, said to be from me to Mrs. Washington, not one word of which did I ever write; those contained in the pamphlet you speak of, are, I presume, equally genuine, and perhaps written by the same author. I should be glad however to see and examine the texture of them, if a favourable opportunity to send them should present.

Lord Cornwallis has certainly embarked for England, but with what view is not so easy to determine: he was eye witness a few days before his departure, to a scene not a little disgraceful to the pride of British valour, in their manœuvre to Chesnut hill, and precipitate return, after boasting their intentions of driving us beyond the mountains.

I am very glad to find that the Assembly of Virginia, have taken matters up so spiritedly; but wish, instead of attempting to raise so many volunteers, they had resolved at all adventures, to complete their regiments by drafting. If all the states would do this, and fall upon ways and means to supply their troops with comfortable clothing upon moderate terms, and Congress would make the commissions of officers of some value to them, every thing would probably go well, making at the same time some reform in the different departments of the army; nothing standing in greater need of it than the quartermasters and commissaries, as no army ever suffered more by their neglects; the consequences of this neglect are much to be dreaded.

I am dear Sir, your most obdt. servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

YORK, 24th June, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I should, long since, have answered your favour of the 25th of May, had it been worth while, (for any thing I had to communicate,) to interrupt your attention from the important affairs with which you are surrounded. It is, indeed, more from motives of complaisance than any thing else, that I now write; but I cannot help congratulating you, sir, on the enemy's abandoning Philadelphia, because, let their motives be what they may, this step evidently proves their prospect of conquest here is vanished. I fancy General Clinton's future operations depend much upon the chapter of accidents. A French war being avoided, efforts will continue to be exerted, for some time, against us; but a foreign war must of necessity carry this army to secure the now defenceless islands, of Great Britain, in the West Indies. A war with France, in the better days of England, would instantly have followed the message of Marquis de Noailles, but the mean and wicked determination to enslave America, removes all thoughts of every thing, but the accomplishment of their favourite object. The British king's message to his Parliament, although it shows mortified pride, and strong sense of insult, yet it clearly marks indecision and doubt about the propriety of resenting the affront. We see, by a publication of the enemy, in the Newport paper, that there is a great probability of Spain having acknowledged the independence of these states, and joined in our alliance. The ambassadors of Spain and of Great Britain, were on the point of returning each to his respective country; of this event taking place I had no doubt, so soon as the plate fleet should have reached Old Spain. Should Great Britain be engaged in war with the Bourbon family, it will furnish us an opportunity of pushing the former quite off this northern continent, which will secure to us peace for a century, instead of war in seven years, which the British possession of Canada, New South Wales, and the Floridas, will inevitably produce. You have, no doubt, heard, sir, that our last Assembly have voted 2,000 infantry to join the army, and a sum of money to forward Gen. Nelson's cavalry; the latter may soon be expected at head quarters. I am, with sincere esteem, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate and ob't serv't.

R. H. LEE.

WHITE PLAINS, August 10th, 1778.

Dear Sir—A few days ago, I received your favour of the 26th ult. enclosing one from Colonel Spotswood, for which I thank you. The reputation which this gentleman had acquired, of being an attentive officer and good disciplinarian, was justly founded; and I consider his leaving the army a loss to the service. The supposed death of his brother, it is natural to believe, had a painful influence upon his mind; but he had long before been very uneasy in his situation, on account of the determination in the case between him and Colonel M'Clanahan, (and, I am persuaded, was only prevented from quitting the line in consequence, through my means); my regard for Colonel Spotswood, and the opinion I entertain of him as an officer, would induce me to interest myself in his favour, whenever I could with propriety. In the present instance, however, I cannot, because I think I should do an injury to the officers of the Virginia line, (if not to those of the line at large,) and because I am convinced his promotion would excite infinite discontents, and produce many resignations. When he left camp, in the month of October, he made a surrender of his commission to me, according to the prevailing custom; this was accepted, and a new arrangement took place among the field officers. After this, I could not suppose him to continue in the line; and to attempt to recall the rise of the officers, to give him a place again, would be to attempt an impossibility. No reasoning upon the subject would be sufficient to get them to consent to it. With respect to the report of the board of general officers, to which you allude, you will excuse me when I say, in my opinion, it will not apply. The case there was, that sundry inferior officers, or juniors, of the same rank, from local circumstances, and the opportunities of application, obtained from the committees, or councils of the states, in whom the power, of appointing officers to the army for 1777, was vested, new commissions, prior in date to those granted afterwards to their seniors; and, in consequence, claimed a right to rank before them. The board determined their claims unjust; and, that the rank which the officers immediately held before their new commissions, should govern, as it did not appear that the councils intended to supercede the senior officers. But here there had been no interruption or relinquishment of the right to rank by resignation, surrender of commission, or any other act of the parties. Nor could I ever think that Colonel Spotswood had cause to complain of the decision on the point in question, between him

and Colonel M'Clanahan. It was founded on the practice which had commonly prevailed—I believe universally, in like cases, viz:—that when state officers became continental, they should rank, with respect to each other, according to their state precedence. This principle appeared to be just, and, I am certain, was the only one, that could be adopted, to give general satisfaction. As many of our regiments in the first instance, and particularly those from Virginia, were raised by the states, without any order by Congress, a contrary rule would have involved great inconveniences; and would have proved an effectual bar, to many valuable officers, coming into service. I have not the most distant suspicion, that Colonel Spotswood is influenced in his wishes, upon the present occasion, in the smallest degree, by any considerations arising from the half pay establishment. I am convinced that he is not; nor do I believe that any officer will impute a matter of the sort to him, or object to his being reintroduced into the line from motives of personal dislike; they will oppose it as an injury to their rights. I thank you much for your congratulations; the prospect we have before us is certainly pleasing, and such as promises a glorious and happy issue to all our struggles. Success in the intended enterprise against Rhode Island, would operate powerfully, I should suppose, upon the minds of the British nation, and bring matters to a speedy conclusion. I wait impatiently to hear from them. I am, dear Sir,

Your most ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

FREDERICKSBURG, in the state of New York, Sept. 23, 1778.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 6th instant, did not get to my hands till the 18th, it found me at our posts in the highlands, on my circuit to this place, and at a time when I had neither leisure nor opportunity to write to you. I am so thoroughly impressed with the necessity of re-enlisting the army, that you may depend upon it, nothing in my power to effect it shall be left unessayed. Instructions and money are in the hands of every brigade for this purpose; and I have directed weekly returns to be made of the progress. An advance in silver dollars, of part of the bounty money, might facilitate the business of recruiting; but I conceive that it would be attended with very pernicious consequences; not from the cause you speak of, to wit, discontenting the other soldiers, but another source, namely, opening the eyes of the whole,

and setting them to reasoning upon the difference between specie and paper. At present, they know that every comfort and necessary of life is insufferably dear, but do not inquire much after the causes; and having no specie among them, to fix the comparison, do not attribute it to the depreciation of the paper money: but let them have ocular proof, that they can purchase as much with one silver, as with four or five paper dollars, and have forestallers, and the disaffected at work among them, in purchasing up the specie, while the latter class of people are painting in lively colours the difference, and using at the same time every art in their power to poison the minds, and sow the seeds of discontent, and then judge of the event—at any rate I think the experiment would be dangerous, and ought not to be tried, but as the dernier resort, lest by obviating one evil, a greater be involved. The designs of the enemy, to me, are mysterious, indeed totally incomprehensible—that they are preparing for some grand manœuvre does not admit of a doubt; but whether it is for an operation on the North River, against the French squadron at Boston (by a junction of their land and sea forces,) or a total or partial evacuation of the United States, is not easy to discover. I believe, myself, that they are waiting orders; which, probably, will arrive in the August packet, to determine their plan; and in the mean while are preparing to remove wholly, or in part, as they shall be directed; but as their motives are equivocal, and will apply to either of the above cases, I have strengthened the posts in the highlands, and thrown the army into such a position as to reinforce them readily, at the same time that we are advanced to the eastward, and can move on in different columns, by different routs, if the operations of the enemy should call us to that quarter.

I am dear Sir, your most obedt. humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. I think it likely that Mr. Custis, (and Colonel Bassett) may be in Philadelphia, at the time this letter may come to your hands; if so, I will thank you for causing to be delivered to him, a letter herewith addressed to your care.

Yours. G. W.

HEAD QUARTERS, Middle Brook, May 5th, 1779.

GENTLEMEN—I have the honour to transmit to your care an open letter for Brigadier General Scott, by which you

will perceive, that I have directed the levies in Virginia, to be formed into three battalions, and to be officered and marched under his command, to reenforce the southern army, as soon as circumstances will possibly permit.

I give you this trouble, lest these directions should interfere with any arrangements you may have made, and that they may be added to, or altered, if you should think it expedient in any point. The sooner the letter can reach General Scott, the better; he will be, it is probable, either at Alexandria or Fredericksburg, but the express who carries it, should be directed to proceed with it till he finds him. I beg leave to mention the subject of arms again, and persuade myself the committee will cause every proper measure to be pursued for supplying those levies with all possible expedition. Such of the officers as are mentioned in the list contained in the letter to General Scott, who are in camp, will proceed to Virginia without delay: I make no doubt the committee have given orders respecting Bland's and Baylor's regiments, if they choose that they should go. I have the honour to be with great respect, gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

Hon. R. H. Lee, Henry Lawrence, and
Thomas Burke, Esq's.

MOUNT VERNON, 12th June, 1784.

Dear Sir—Unsolicited by, and unknown to Mr. Paine, I take the liberty of hinting the services, and distressed (for so I think it may be called,) situation of that gentleman. That his Common Sense, and many of his Crises, were well-timed and had a happy effect upon the public mind, none I believe, who will recur to the epochas at which they were published, will deny. That his services hitherto have passed off unnoticed, is obvious to all; and that he is chagrined and necessitous, I will undertake to aver: does not common justice then point to some compensation. He is not in circumstances to refuse the bounty of the public; New York, not the least distressed, nor most able state in the Union, has set the example. He prefers the benevolence of the states individually to an allowance from Congress, for reasons which are conclusive in his own mind, and such as I think may be approved by others. His views are moderate, a decent independency is, I believe, the height of his ambition; and if you view his services in the American cause, in the

same important light that I do, I am sure you will have pleasure in obtaining it for him. I am, with esteem and regard, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

MOUNT VERNON, December 14th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—The letter which you did me the honour to write to me, on the 20th of last month, only came to my hands by the post preceding the date of this. For the copy of the treaty held with the Six Nations, at fort Stanwix, you will please to accept my thanks. These people have given, I think, all that the United States could reasonably have asked of them: more, perhaps, than the state of New York conceives ought to have been required from them, by any other than their own legislature.

I wish they were better satisfied; individual states opposing the measures of the United States, encroaching upon the territory of one another, and setting up old and obsolete claims, is verifying the predictions of our enemies; and, in reality, is truly unfortunate. If the western tribes are as well disposed to treat with us as the northern Indians have been, and will cede a competent district of country north west of the Ohio, to answer our present purposes, it would be a circumstance as unexpected as pleasing to me; for it was apprehended, if they agreed to the latter at all, it would be reluctantly; but the example of the Six Nations, who, (if they have not relinquished their claim,) have pretensions to a large part of those lands, may have a powerful influence on the western gentry, and smooth the way for the commissioners, who have proceeded to fort Pitt.

It gave me pleasure to find, by the last gazettes, that a sufficient number of states had assembled to form a Congress; and that you had been placed in the chair of it. On this event, permit me to offer my compliments of congratulation. To whatever causes the delay of this meeting may have been ascribed, it most certainly has an unfavourable aspect; contributes to lessen—already too low—the dignity and importance of the federal government; and is hurtful to our national character in the eyes of Europe.

It is said (how founded I know not) that our Assembly have repealed their former act respecting British debts. If this be true, and the state of New York have not acted repugnant to the terms of the treaty, the British government

can no longer hold the western posts under that cover; but I shall be mistaken if they do not entrench themselves behind some other expedient, to retain them; or will appoint a time for surrendering them, of which we cannot avail ourselves; the probable consequences whereof will be the destruction of the works.

The assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have now under consideration, the extension of the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James; and opening a communication between them and the western waters. They seem fully impressed with the political, as well as the commercial, advantages, which would result from the accomplishment of these great objects; and, I hope, will embrace the present moment to put them in a train for execution. Would it not, at the same time, be worthy the wisdom and attention of Congress to have the western waters well explored; the navigation of them fully ascertained; accurately laid down; and a complete and perfect map made of the country; at least as far westerly as the Miamies, running into the Ohio and lake Erie; and to see how the waters of these communicate with the river St. Joseph, which empties into the lake Michigan, and with the Wabash? for I cannot forbear observing that the Miami village, in Hutchins' map, if it and the waters are laid down with accuracy, points to a very important post for the union. The expense attending such an undertaking could not be great; the advantages would be unbounded; for sure I am, nature has made such a display of her bounties in those regions, that the more the country is explored, the more it will rise in estimation; consequently, greater will the revenue be to the union.

Would there be any impropriety, do you think, sir, in reserving for special sale, all mines, minerals, and salt springs, in the general grants of land from the United States? The public, instead of the few knowing ones, might, in that case, receive the benefits which would proceed from the sale of them, without infringing any rule of justice that occurs to me, or their own laws; but, on the contrary, inflict just punishment upon those, who, in defiance of the latter, have dared to create enemies to disturb the public tranquillity, by roaming over the country, marching and surveying the valuable spots in it, to the great disquiet of the western tribes of Indians, who have viewed these proceedings with jealous indignation. To hit upon a happy medium price for the western lands, for the prevention of monopoly on one hand, and not discouraging useful settlers on the other, will, no doubt, require consideration; but ought not, in my opinion, to employ too

much time before the terms are announced. The spirit of emigration is great. People have got impatient; and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either. It is easier to prevent than to remedy an evil. I shall be very happy in the continuation of your correspondence; and, with sentiments of great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

Your most ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

RICHARD H. LEE, Esquire.

MOUNT VERNON, February 8th, 1785.

DEAR SIR—Since my last. I have had the honor to receive your favours of the 26th of December, and 16th of January. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, have enacted laws for improving and extending the navigation of the Potomac, of which the enclosed is a copy; they are exactly similar in both states. At the same time, and at the joint and equal expense of the two governments, the sum of 6,666 2-3 dollars, are voted for opening, and keeping in repair, a road from the highest practicable navigation of this river, to that of the river Cheat, or Monongahela, as commissioners (who are appointed to survey and lay out the same) shall judge most convenient and beneficial to the western settlers: and have concurred in an application to the state of Pennsylvania, for permission to open another road from fort Cumberland to the Youghioany, at the three forks, or Turkey foot.

A similar bill to the one enclosed, is passed by our Assembly, respecting the navigation of James river, and the communication between it and the waters of the great Kanhawa: and the executive is authorized, by a resolve, to appoint commissioners to examine and report the most convenient course for a canal between Elizabeth river and the waters of Roanoke, with an estimate of the expense: and if the best communication should be found to require the concurrence of the state of North Carolina thereto, to make application to the legislature thereof, accordingly.

Towards the latter part of the year 1783, I was honoured with a letter from the countess of Huntingdon, briefly reciting her benevolent intention of spreading Christianity among the tribes of Indians inhabiting our western territory, and expressing a desire that my advice and assistance might be afforded her to carry this charitable design into execution.

I wrote her ladyship for answer, that it would by no means comport with the plan of retirement I had promised myself, to take an active or responsible part in this business; and that it was my belief there would be no other way to effect her pious and benevolent design, but by first reducing these people to a state of greater civilization; but that I would give every aid in my power, consistent with that ease and tranquillity I meant to seek, for the remainder of my life, to facilitate her views. Since this, I have been favoured with other letters from her, and a few days ago, under cover from Sir James Jay, I received the papers herewith enclosed; as the plan contemplated by Lady Huntingdon, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object, and may, as I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before you, for your free and candid sentiments thereon. The communication I make of this matter to you, sir, is in a private way; but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntingdon to the members individually, or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these: First, I do not believe that any of the states to whom she has written (unless it may be New-York) are in circumstances, since their cession of territory, to comply with the requisitions respecting emigration; for it has been privately hinted to me (and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety) that, notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the address, respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants (which was purposely omitted to avoid giving alarm in England) the former will be great, and the useful artizans among them many. Next, because such emigration, if it should accomplish the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes which would thereby be answered, would be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her ladyship's wishes, it must nevertheless be of considerable importance, from the increase of population by orderly and well disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier, and attempt the conversion of the savages without any expense to the Union. I see but one objection to a compact, unmixed, and powerful settlement of this kind, (if it should ever become so) the weight of which you will judge of: it is (and her ladyship seems to have been aware of it, and endeavours to guard against it) placing a people, in a body, upon our exteriour, contiguous to Canada, who may bring with them strong prejudices against us and our forms of govern-

ment, and equally strong attachments to the country and constitution they leave, without the means, being detached and unmixed with citizens of different sentiments, of having them eradicated.

Her ladyship has spoken so sensibly and feelingly on the religious and benevolent purposes of the plan, that no language, of which I am possessed, can add aught to enforce her observations; and no place, in my opinion, bids so fair to answer her views as that spot, in Hutchins' map, marked Miami village and fort; from hence there is a communication to all parts by water, and at which, in my judgment, there ought to be a post. Do not think it strange, my good sir, that I send you the original papers from Lady Huntingdon. Many, mistakingly, think I am retired to ease and that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been *obliged* to write so much *myself*, as I have done since my retirement. Was this confined to friendly communications, and to my own business, it would be equally pleasing and trifling; but I have a thousand references of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled, but which, nevertheless, must receive some answer. These, with applications for certificates, copies of papers, &c. &c. &c., deprive me of my usual and necessary exercise. I have tried to get a secretary or clerk to take the drudgery of this business off my hands, but hitherto in vain. That you might not wonder at my parting with original papers, upon an interesting subject, I thought it incumbent on me to assign the reason, but I pray *you* to be *assured* that I have no other motive for it.

Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlet you sent me, and the resolutions respecting the temporary and permanent residence of Congress. If I might be permitted to hazard an opinion of the latter, I would say that, by the time your federal buildings on the banks of the Delaware (in the point of a triangle when compared to the shape and extent of the confederated states,) are fit for the reception of Congress, it will be found that they are very inconveniently placed for the seat of the empire, and will have to undergo a *second* edition in one more convenient. If the union continues and this is not the case, I will agree to be placed amongst the false prophets and suffer for evil predictions.

The letter which went under cover of my former, and which arrived too late for the Marquis de la Fayette, I pray you to

forward to him by the packet. With great esteem and regard,

I have the honour to be,
Dear sir,
Your most humble and obedient servant,
GEO: WASHINGTON.

His Excellency, R. H. Lee.

MOUNT VERNON, 22d June, 1785.

Dear Sir—I stand indebted to you for your favours of the 3d, 7th, and 29th of last month, and feel myself exceedingly obliged to your excellency for the communications, and enclosures therein.

It gives me pleasure to find that an ordinance of Congress has passed, respecting the western territory. A little longer delay of this business, and I believe the country would have been settled, notwithstanding all that could have been done to prevent it; as it is, I am not clear that the same respect will be paid *now* to this ordinance, that would have been at an earlier period, before men began to speculate in lands northwest of the Ohio, and to obtrude themselves thereon. From the general tenor of my letters, from very respectable and intelligent characters in France, as late as the end of March, it would seem most likely that the dispute between the emperor and Holland will be settled without bloodshed, and that the former will scarcely be able to effect the exchange of his dominions in the Netherlands for the dutchy of Bavaria; among other reasons, because the Duke Deux Ponts, nephew and heir to the elector, is opposed thereto. But, notwithstanding, the state of politics and temper of some of the formidable powers of Europe are such, as to place war at no very remote distance. I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. (Macauly) Graham; who, after a stay of about ten days, left this in order to embark for England from New-York. I am obliged to you for introducing a lady to me whose reputation among the literati is so high, and whose principles are so much and so justly admired by the friends to liberty and of mankind. It gave me pleasure to find that her sentiments, respecting the inadequacy of the powers of Congress, (as also those of Dr. Price) coincided with my own. Experience evinces the truth of these observations, and the late movements of the mercantile interest exhibits a recent proof of the conviction it is working in the popular mind; but it is unfortunate for us, that evils which might have been averted must

be first felt, and our national character for wisdom, justice, and temperance called in question, before we can govern the political machine.

The plan for improving and extending the navigation of the river Potomac is in a promising way; enclosed, I do myself the honour of sending you the printed proceedings of the board of directors. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments and every good wish for you, and with great esteem. regard, and respect,

I am, dear sir,
Your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,
GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Col. Wm. Brent died two or three days ago. Your son Ludwell was well at our court yesterday.

MOUNT VERNON, March 15, 1785.

Dear Sir—I have had the honour to receive your excellency's favour of the 14th of February, and pray you to accept my thanks for the copy of the treaty with the Western Indians, with which you were so obliging as to furnish me; from the accounts given me last fall, (whilst I was on the Ohio) I did not expect such a cession of territory from the tribes that met. The Shawnees are pretty numerous, and among the most warlike of the Ohio Indians; but if the subscribing Indians mean to keep good faith, and a treaty should be favourably negotiated with the more southerly Indians, their spirit must yield, or they might easily be extirpated. The wisdom of Congress will now be called upon to fix a happy medium price on these lands, and to point out the most advantageous mode of seating them, so as that law and good government may be administered, and the Union strengthened and supported thereby. Progressive seating, I conceive, is the only means by which this can be effected; and unless in the scale of politics, more than one new state is found necessary at this time, the unit I believe would be found more pregnant with advantages than the decies. The latter if I mistake not, will be more *advancive* of individual interest, than the public welfare. As you will have the untowardness, jealousy, and pride, which are characteristic of the Spanish nation to contend with, it is more than probable that Mr. Gardoque will give Congress a good deal of trouble respecting the navigation of the river Mississippi. To me it should seem, that the true policy of that government would be to

make New Orleans a free mart, instead of shutting its ports; but their ideas of trade are very confined I believe. I take the liberty of putting a letter under cover of this to Mr. Lee. Mrs. Washington offers her respectful compliments to you.

I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obt. humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

His Excellency Richard H. Lee.

MOUNT VERNON, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir—In my absence with the directors of the Potomac navigation, to examine the river and fix a plan of operations, your favour begun on the 23d, and ended the 31st of July, came to this place. I am sorry to hear of your late indisposition, but congratulate you on your recovery; hoping that the re-establishment of your health will be of long continuance. The packet which you were so obliging as to send me, came safely, and I thank you for your care of it; but for want of knowledge of the language, I can form no opinion of my own of the dramatic performance of Monsieur Serviteur le Barbier.

The currency of my information from France is, that the dispute between the emperor and Holland, will be accommodated without bloodshed; but after the explicit declarations which have been made on both sides, I do not see how either (especially the first) can recede from his claims. To save appearances, and to let the contending parties down handsomely, say some of my letters, is now the greatest difficulty; but all agree, that a spark may set the whole in flames; indeed Bavaria, it is expected, will yet do this.

It is to be hoped that our minister at the court of London, will bring that government to an explanation respecting the western posts, which it still retains on the American side of the line, contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the treaty. My opinion from the first, and so I declared it, was, that these posts would be detained from us, as long as they could be held under any pretence whatsoever. I have not changed it, though I wish for cause to do so, as it may ultimately become a serious matter. However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it, that the navigation of the Mississippi, at this time, ought to be no object with us; on the contrary, till we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic states and the western territory, the obstructions had better remain. There

is nothing which binds one country, or one state, to another, but interest; without this cement, the western inhabitants (which more than probably will be composed in a great degree of foreigners) can have no predilection for us; and a commercial connexion is the only tie we can have upon them.

It is clear to me that the trade of the lakes, and of the river Ohio, as low as the Great Kanhawa, (if not to the falls) may be brought to the ports on the Atlantic, easier and cheaper, (taking the whole voyage together) than it can be carried to New Orleans; but once open the door to the latter, before the obstructions are removed from the former; let commercial connexions (which lead to others) be formed, and the habit of that trade be well established, and it will be found no easy matter to divert it; and vice versa.

When the settlements are stronger and more extended to the westward, the navigation of the river Mississippi will be an object of importance; and we shall be able then (reserving our claim) to speak a more efficacious language than policy, I think, should dictate at present.

I never have, and I hope never shall hear, any serious mention of a paper emission in this state, yet such a thing may be in agitation. Ignorance and design are productive of much mischief, (the first is the tool of the latter,) and are often set to work as suddenly as unexpectedly; those with whom I have conversed on this subject, in this part of the state, reprobate the idea exceedingly.

We have lately had the pleasure of Miss Lee's, and Miss Hannah's company at this place; they were both well five days ago. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her compliments; and with sentiments of great respect, esteem and regard,

I am dear Sir, your most obedt. and affectionate humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Your name, I well remember, stands amongst those of the subscribers for a share in the Potomac Company.

G. W.

MOUNT VERNON, February 20, 1787.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 15th, with the seed of the honey locust came safe to hand, and claims my particular thanks. I have but one doubt of its forming the best hedge in the world; and that is, whether it can be sufficiently

dwarfed. If this cannot be effected, the other purpose mentioned in your letter, and a valuable one too, of subserving stock, is alone sufficient to induce the cultivation of the tree.

Mrs. Washington offers respectful compliments to Mrs. Lee, to whom, though I have not the honour of being known, I beg leave to tender mine; we both join in best wishes for you, and the young ladies, and with great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 19th July, 1787.

DEAR SIR—I had the honour to receive your favour of the 15th instant, and thank you for the ordinance which was enclosed in it.

My sentiments with respect to the navigation of the Mississippi, have been long fixed, and are not dissimilar to those which are expressed in your letter. I have ever been of opinion, that the true policy of the Atlantic states, would be, instead of contending prematurely, for the free navigation of that river, (which eventually, and perhaps as soon as it shall be our true interest to obtain it) must happen, to open and improve the natural communication with the western country through which, the produce of it, might be transported with convenience and ease to our markets. Till you get low down the Ohio, I conceive, (considering the length of the voyage to New Orleans —the strength of the current—and the time required to perform the voyage,) that it would be the interest of the inhabitants thereof, to bring their produce to our ports; and sure I am, there is no other tie, by which they will long form a link in the chain of federal union. I believe, however, from the temper in which those people appear to be, and from the ambitious and turbulent spirit of some of their demagogues, that it has become an important point to decide (when every circumstance which attends this business is taken into view,) what is best to be done: the state of Virginia, having entered so warmly into the matter, is not among the least embarrassing and disagreeable parts of the difficulty.

Will you permit me to put the enclosed letter under cover to you? From the gentlemen to whom it is addressed, I have lately received a letter, of which, this is an acklowledgement. With very great esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, August 2d, 1789.

DEAR SIR—The extreme hurry in which I have been thrown for several days, to compare the merits and pretentions of the several applicants for appointments, under the revenue law, (in order that the nominations might speedily follow the passage of the collection bill,) has prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your favour of the 27th ultimo, until this time. Mr. Charles Lee, will certainly be brought forward as collector of the port of Alexandria: but for the reason you have assigned, and from a persuasion that Mr. Thomas Lee is under a mistake with respect to the supposed emoluments, of the office at Dumfries, I think it would be best that Scott should go there: which will give poor Hanson, (who is worthy of something better if with propriety it could be given to him) the surveyorship at Alexandria.

As I am perfectly unacquainted with the port of Yeocomico, and with the characters living there, I would thank you for naming a fit person as a collector for that district, by the bearer, or by ten o'clock, A. M., to morrow.

I thought you looked badly the other day, but not having heard of your indisposition, I said nothing; I hope your health is quite restored. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

RICHARD HENRY LEE,

AND

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, April 29th, 1777.

Dear Sir—If I were to consider punctilio more than the suggestions of friendship, I should expect an answer to some of the letters I have written you, before I despatched another; but I ever hated ceremonies, and shall not commence ceremony with you. I wish it were in my power to give you any very interesting news, but alas! the slow assembling of an army, prevents any attempt from us upon the enemy, and will give them an opportunity of collecting reenforcements from all quarters.

The French ministry assure our commissioners, that few succours can be drawn from Germany; but we find they are endeavouring to supply deficiencies from among the tories in the states of Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, where they have secret emissaries in abundance; for these purposes of corruption it seems, that Lord Howe is furnished with a secretary, who is the greatest adept in the art of bribing that now lives. I am afraid this country furnishes too good materials for him to work upon. The plan of the British court, if they can find men and money, and should not be disturbed by other wars, as it was settled in January last, was to reenforce Carleton and Howe; the latter to enter New England with his whole force, for their *extermination;* whilst the former kept the middle colonies in awe, by invading New York through the lakes; Burgoyne with ten thousand men, chiefly Germans, to attack Virginia and Maryland; the southern and middle colonies to be put under a *military* government. This may be relied on as fact, and shows, if it wanted showing, the just and merciful spirit that animates

the leaders of our enemy's council; and I assure you, those that execute in the field are faithful representatives. It is on all hands agreed, that our own tories are more formidable to us, than the British force, and that a few leaders among them, are the authors of all the mischief. It becomes then every legislature, to secure the country against their machinations, by the most vigorous and discouraging laws. I really believe, that numbers of our lazy, worthless young men, will not be induced to come forth into the service of their country, unless the states adopt the mode recommended by Congress, of ordering drafts from the militia. This may induce the young . . . . . to take the continental bounty, rather than serve for nothing of that sort. If the eighty-eight battalions were completed, adieu to British tyranny, and every chance for its succeeding. Howe's army still remains on the heights near Brunswick, and General Washington to occupy the country round him. Farewell, dear sir; regard me as

Your affectionate friend.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA, May 20th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—We are this moment informed here, that some evil disposed people have industriously propagated among the North Carolina troops, and among the recruits of Virginia, in the upper parts, *that the plague* rages in our army; in consequence of which, it is said, the recruiting business stops, and desertions are frequent. There never was a more infamous and groundless falsehood.

The army is extremely healthy, and the proper measures are pursued to keep them so. I mention this, dear sir, that some adequate plan may be adopted, to stop the progress of such wicked lies, as are now with industry circulated through the country; force having failed, our enemy's fraud is substituted, and corruption is swiftly and silently pushed through every quarter. One plan, now in frequent use, is to assassinate the characters of the friends of America, in every place, and by every means; at this moment, they are now reading in Congress, an audacious attempt of this kind against the brave General Arnold. Farewell, dear sir, I wish you happiness.

Nothing new in Jersey.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA, August 25th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—It will not perhaps be disagreeable to you, in your retirement, sometimes to hear the events of war; and how in other respects we proceed in the arduous business we are engaged in, since the loss of Ticonderoga, (into the cause of which, and the conduct of the commanding officers, Congress have ordered inquiry to be made.) In consequence of General Burgoyne's speedy march to fort Letward, our affairs in that quarter begin to wear a favourable appearance. In addition to Burgoyne's force, another body of men came down the Mohock river, by way of Ossnego, and laid siege to fort Stanwix, or Schuyler, as it is now called; at this place a battle ensued with the Tryon county militia, in which the enemy were driven from the ground, with the loss of more than two hundred Indians, and several regulars. Colonel Willett making a sally from the fort, did great injury to the enemy, and took from them a great quantity of baggage, with two or three field pieces. However, the militia having lost many men in the action, and their best officers having been killed or wounded, they retired, and left the enemy to return and lay siege to fort Schuyler, the garrison of which was bravely defending it, when General Arnold was detached with a body of men to relieve the place; we expect every day to hear of his success. To the northward of this, in New Hampshire, General Stark, with two thousand militia, attacked Colonel Baum and fifteen hundred regular troops with cannon; the consequence, you will find in the enclosed hand-bill. This was an important victory, well-timed, and will probably occasion Mr. Burgoyne to retire very quickly; if he does not, I can be bold to *augur* his destruction. He is at Saratoga and fort Letward, our main army, a few miles in his front, at the mouth of Mohock river; I expect Generals Lincoln and Arnold, will presently be in his rear, after which his chance for returning is very small. General Gates has joined the northern army, and now commands in that quarter. Putnam, with five thousand men, commands on the heights of Hudson river, above New York, in which place, General Clinton is left with about three thousand men. After General Howe had long raised the curiosity of this part of the world, to know what could be his view in embarking his army, and coasting it for five weeks in a most oppressively hot season, at length he appears at the very head of Chesapeake bay, where he remains with more than two hundred sail of vessels; the troops not yet landed, that we know of, but I imagine they were put on shore yesterday. We are

left yet to guess his object; it may be supposed, either for this city, or to conduct a line from Chesapeake to New Castle, and thereby enclose a large tract of country, between that bay, Delaware, and the sea. Let his plan be what it may, General Washington, with a gallant army, is gone to enter a caveat. The general with his army passed through this city yesterday, and they made a fine appearance: to aid the army, and make the business secure, Congress has called for militia from this state, Delaware, Maryland, and the northern counties of Virginia. Should General Howe venture to enter the country against this force, I think his ruin will be sure, notwithstanding we are told his master depends on the desparate efforts that Generals Howe and Cornwallis must make to redeem their "bankrupt honour;" so, we learn from France, the king of England hath said. We have no reason to suppose from our foreign intelligence, that a war in Europe will immediately take place, but that every preparation for it, is making, remains without doubt; and, in the mean time, we shall surely receive most substantial aid from our friends there. The fleet of France grows stronger daily, and with it, the spirit of the court rises, as appears by the answer to Lord Stormont, when he told the French minister, that the peace cannot continue long, if North America continued to draw supplies from France, "Nous ne desirons pas la Guerre et ne la craignons pas." In truth every act of falsehood and fraud has been practised to prevent a war there, but it seems clear that this will not long prevail. Dr. Lee is returned from Spain, and is gone to the Prussian court; that monarch is fond of commerce and is desirous of being acquainted with the whole nature of ours. He is offended with the court of London, and has no reason to fear its resentment. We have good reason to expect considerable advantage from his friendship. If our friends fail us not, and our union continues, no cause was ever safer than ours; to prevent the former most extensive and vigorous taxes should immediately take place. The sum in circulation is immense, and no corrective can be applied but taxation; nor was there ever a time, when the vast plenty of money rendered that business more easy. The loan-office, with that, will, I believe, answer; and upon the success of our friends, will probably depend the events of our exertions. The confederation progresses but slowly, occasioned by the immensity of business created by the war; but, I find, our right to our charter bounds, as stated by our act of government, will be strongly contested. The charter of 1609, it is said. has been vacated, and that no transfer of that charter right can be shown from the company to the

people of Virginia; and that therefore the ungranted lands were the property of the crown, and being taken from it by common exertions, must become common stock. Will you be so kind as to favour me with your authorities and reasons, in support of our rights. I am, with great regard and esteem, dear sir, your most affectionate and obedient

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

YORK, May 11, 1778.

DEAR SIR—We have once more ventured into the field of composition, as the enclosed address will show you; and I have the pleasure to acquaint you that Congress have unanimously ratified the treaties with France, and directed the ratifications to be presented for exchange in due season. The enclosed pamphlet, I take to be a production of Dr. Franklin; it is well written, and was published first in Holland. When it began to make a noise, the British minister procured its suppression; but this, as usual, raised the public curiosity, and procured it additional readers. We have translated it here, and omitting one or two paragraphs, that are not now true; it will be published, next week, in the gazette of this place. The reasons are good, and may be well used, in these states, to support public credit. Suppose you were to have a translation published by way of supplement, to our Virginia gazettes. My heart is so bent upon the success of our country, that it grieves me extremely to hear a probability of measures being adopted, that, I am sure, will injure us. I am told that application will be made to this Assembly, to make Mr. Loycantes commissioner. Is it possible, that such an application can be attended to! Thus to treat a gentleman of unquestioned ability, and of reputation in France, and after we have applied to that court to obtain leave for his longer residence among us than his furlough permitted! His character will not be hurt by it; but how mutable shall we appear, and how totally wrong it will be thus to dismiss an able, zealous, and most industrious artist, whilst we remain utterly ignorant of the necessary knowledge that he is both able and willing to instruct us in? I think the wise men of our Assembly will suppress the spirit of vain ambition that prompts to this selfish application.

We are told that the enemies' movements at Philadelphia

denote their departure; but these, perhaps, may be designed to amuse us, and prevent the collection of a strong army.

I am, dear Sir, sincerely yours,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, July 20, 1778.

DEAR SIR—The condition of our affairs is much changed, since last I had the pleasure of writing to you, as by the favour of his most Christian majesty, we now are become masters of the sea, and our own coast at least. Ten days ago arrived in the Delaware, a French squadron commanded by Count D'Estaing, of twelve sail of the line and four frigates, having of seamen and land troops eleven thousand men on board. There is one ship of 90 guns, one of 80, six of 74, three of 64, and four frigates. Having missed the English here, they proceeded to New York in quest of them, and are now before that harbour, the depth of water being unfortunately insufficient to admit such large ships. The English, whose fleet is inferior, are well contented to remain within the honours, and suffer Monsieur, the count, to intercept every vessel coming to New York. He has already taken fifteen sail. But the French admiral being an officer of great activity and spirit, seems not content with this small work, and therefore, I believe, he will go immediately to Rhode Island, where he can easily destroy the ships, and with the assistance of our force there make prisoners of two thousand British troops on that island. With this squadron came Le Sieur Girard, minister plenipotentiary from his most Christian majesty. He is a sensible well bred man, and perfectly well acquainted with the politics of Europe. From him I learn, that the court of France considers the message of the King of England to his Parliament, and their answer upon the Count Noaille's notification of our alliance, as a denunciation of war, on the part of Great Britain, and that they mean to act accordingly without an express declaration, leaving this last to England. We are busied now in settling the ceremonials for the reception of foreign ministers of every denomination, and I assure you it is a work of no small difficulty.

When this is finished Monsieur Girard will have his audience in Congress, I suppose this week. General Washington has crossed the North River, and will co-operate with the admiral in measures to be conducted against the common

enemy. The British commissioners have sent us a second letter very silly, and equally insolent.

The preliminaries, insisted on by Congress (an acknowledgment of independence, and a withdrawing of their fleets and armies) not having been either of them, complied with, this letter is to receive no answer. We have detected and fully exposed Governor Johnston, who under the plausible guise of friendship and virtue, has endeavoured to bribe members of Congress; the whole body, indeed, as well as individual members. The confederation is ratified by ten states; there remains only Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. But, I suppose, their obstinacy will, ere long, submit to their interest, and a perfect coalition take place.

I am much hurried, though with great esteem, dear Sir, your most obt. servt.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, August 10, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I agree, entirely, with you, concerning the importance of the confederation, and have never failed to press it. Ten states have ratified; Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland have not, and one of them, Maryland, has adjourned, until November, so that the new Congress, under the confederation, cannot meet this year, at the time proposed by the confederacy. The enclosed paper contains all the news we have, except that it is well reported that Lord Howe being reenforced by four ships of the line, sailed from New York on Thursday last, with his whole force, to attack the French squadron now at Rhode Island. Howe has a greater number of ships, but Count D'Estaing has heaviest metal. The attack by sea and land was to be made on Thursday on the enemy at Rhode Island, where they have five thousand five hundred men strongly posted, and three or four frigates. Our force will be about fourteen thousand men besides the squadron. Success seems certain, if Lord Howe does not get up in time to prevent it. The Count D'Estaing is an officer of approved merit, and his ships very strong in every respect, so that I think he will check the British insolence on the sea, as we have already done on the land. No war in Europe on the 10th of June, nor do I believe Great Britain means to resent the proceedings of France. It seems to be a contest between the two nations which shall be last in declaring war. Some advantages to accrue from treaties, is the cause of this.

To us it matters little, since we so powerfully experience the aid of France. For it is certain this squadron is to act with and for us, so long as the enemy, by continuing here, renders it necessary. There is great probability that the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia, will fall out about the Bavarian dominions. There will be a battle of giants, each party having three hundred thousand men, the best disciplined troops in the world. France, I fancy, has taken measures to avoid this quarrel, that her whole force may be employed against England. The design against Detroit is abandoned for the present, and a force will be sent into the Indian country to chastise their late insolence. I heartily wish that the wisdom of our country may be early next session employed to regulate our finance, restore public credit, determine about our back lands, and if possible get rid of our public commerce. If it succeeds with us, I believe it will be the first instance that has ever appeared of the kind. But many there are of injury derived from such trade. Whilst necessity impelled, it was unavoidable, but now that private commerce will furnish abundance of all things, I incline to think our interest will consist in withdrawing from foreign trade. Remember me to Mr. Mazzie.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, May 3d, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Always attentive to your commands, I have obtained here, and now enclose you the song and the receipt you desired. I once had both of them at home, but they are mislaid among a mass of papers, so that I could find neither previous to my leaving Chantilly, or your request would then have been complied with. I hope you have received the pamphlet I sent you some weeks ago, entitled, "Observations on the American Revolution," containing a collection of the most material Congress papers, with a few remarks interspersed, in order to show in one comprehensive view the progress of our glorious revolution, and to rectify some false representations of the British commissioners. This pamphlet was sent by an express that came here from Mr. Harvey, and returned to Williamsburgh, with intention to follow Mr. Harvey to Albemarle, if they found him not at the former of the places. I wish it were in my power to entertain you with news, but we are here as void of that as if profound

peace reigned throughout the world. We have not heard from Europe for four months, and although there then seemed a disposition in many powers, to restore the general tranquillity, yet all were industriously preparing for war, and some being actually engaged; the fate of millions hung in doubtful balance. The armies here continue quiet within their quarters; that of the enemy, by their late embarkation of nine regiments, rendered too weak for taking the field, must content itself with holding New York as the Gibraltar of America. If we can baffle the southern invasion, it is clear to me, that the game will be presently up with our enemies, and that they will be compelled by inevitable necessity, to be content with the loss of thirteen flourishing states. A very fit consequence of the foolish and wicked attempt to reduce to slavery, so many free, useful, and affectionate friends. I hope that when you and my other friend consider all things, that you will not blame me for sending my resignation to the Assembly. I am really injured in my health, by such continued close application, and a numerous family demand some attention; add to these, that, persecuted as I have been, by the united voice of toryism, speculation, faction, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, nothing but the certain prospect of doing essential service to my country, can compensate for the injuries I receive. It would content me indeed, to sacrifice every consideration to the public good, that would result from such persons as yourself, Mr. Wythe, Mr. Mason, and some others, being in Congress, I would with persevering ardour through every difficulty, in conjunction with such associates. I am informed, that Colonel Blackburn, intends to propose a bill this session, for the relief of landlords; I shoud suppose, that the wisdom and justice of the legislature, can, and will devise some remedy for the relief of this class of people among us; I am one who have the misfortune, to see myself and family, nearly ruined by the retrospective effect of our law. Almost the whole of my landed estate was rented out some years before this war, for low cash rents, and under the faith of existing law, which secured me specie for my rents. The vast sums of paper money, that have been issued, (and this being now a tender for the discharge of rents growing from old contracts,) and the consequent depreciation, has well nigh effected an entire transfer of my estate to my servants; this year, sir, the rents of four thousand of fine land, will not buy me twenty barrels of corn. I am very far from desiring, that the law should place these contracts literally as they were, but substantially, it seems just that they should be; when the tenant agreed to pay me six

pounds for an hundred acres rent, he could not sell his tobacco for more than sixteen or eighteen shillings an hundred, now he sells his tobacco for ten and twelve pounds per cwt. It does not appear to me, that the public good can be concerned in thus transferring the property of landlords, to their tenants; but, public justice demands, that the true meaning, and genuine spirit of contracts, should be complied with. It appears to me, that an act of commutation, might set this business right, by directing the payment in produce, at the prevailing price of such produce when the contracts were made, leaving this to be settled by the courts annually, as they formerly did, in the case of exchange. I well know your love of justice, to be such, that your approbation will be given to any proper plan, for doing right in the premises: for my own part, I am willing to suffer every thing, rather than injure the public cause, but in the present state of things, I can see no possibility of public injury, from thus rendering private justice. I am, with much esteem and regard, dear sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA, May 22, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I have paid due attention to your favour of the 21st, and I believe there would have been no difficulty in obtaining what is desired for Baron de Geismar, had not the enemy created the difficulties that do exist. They absolutely refuse to admit partial exchanges, and they have lately proposed such unfair terms for general exchange, that nothing can be done in either of these ways. They will not allow one of our officers to come out on parole, if like permission be granted to one of theirs, as appeared in the case of Major Jasserers, of the regiment of Hesse Hanau. Upon consideration of this matter, with your friend Mr. Peters, who is one of the board of war, we conclude, the way to put this matter into the best train, will be for the baron to apply to the British commander in chief, for this parole exchange, and write to General Kniphausen, to support the request, that these letters be sent here to the board of war, and they will immediately forward them through the commissary of prisoners, expressing their willingness to gratify the baron. An objection is raised here to gratifying this officer, without receiving something like an equivalent from the enemy, as tending to encourage their obstinacy, in repressing a general

exchange, on terms of fair equality, by which our captive officers . . . . . We have no news here, but what comes from Virginia, all good men are waiting with anxious expectation to hear that our countrymen have given these wicked invaders cause to repent of their undertaking. We have been told that Colonel Hamilton, of Detroit, is our prisoner, made so by the brave Colonel Clarke; I wish it may be true, and I hope the prisoners will be well secured, because his enmity to us, his activity and influence among the Indians, are equal and all very great. My respects to Mr. Wythe, and my other friends. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

TRENTON, November 18th, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR—The same cause that deprived me of the pleasure of hearing from you sooner, in answer to my former letter, has, in a great degree, prevented me from sooner acknowledging the receipt of your favour, of September 23d, 1783, which I received in the following winter, when labouring under a long continued, severe illness, that has nearly ended my days. I thank God that I am now pretty well recovered, insomuch that I have been prevailed on, once more, to take a seat in Congress, my brother's three years, having ended with this federal year. I am much grieved, my dear friend, to observe the wonderful lassitude that prevails in public affairs; it is now eighteen days since Congress ought to have assembled here, and, as yet, we have but five states; and it surprises me, that these five are southern; none but the worthy Dr. Holton, from your state, being yet arrived from the eastward; whence, formerly, we used to derive most punctuality, alacrity, and judicious despatch of public business; yet, there are many subjects of great importance, that demand the speedy, temperate, wise, and firm, discussion of Congress. We have seen here, the late report of a committee of the privy council, in Great Britain, upon the petition of the West Indian planters, and merchants, proposing an open and liberal trade with these United States. In the report, all the illiberal and senseless principles of commerce, in Lord Sheffield's book, are taken up and recommended. This report was laid on the table of the House of Commons; but, it seems, that the Parliament is prorogued, without touching the subject of their commerce with us; so that it remains upon the old ground of proclamation, inter-

dicting trade with the British West Indies, but through the medium of British vessels. It is not difficult for an attentive and diligent inquirer, to discern the old leaven working in the British councils; the same men still rule in secret; the same measures are wished to be practised. Nor does it signify much whether Pitt or North, comes forward upon the stage; the nation, too like a strong, proud, and sullen man, angry from unexpected defeat, and, imputing misfortunes to casualties, would seem not averse to a second trial. I remember once when I detested the moderate man; at this moment, I think, that moderation, wisdom, firmness, and attention, are the principles proper for our adoption, and highly becoming the dignity of our successful situation; being always prepared for the worst, the best events will not be unpleasing; it is observable, that great hopes are entertained beyond the water, from the expectation of discord, disunion, and apathy, on our parts; I sincerely wish that their hopes may be blasted. We understand, that Deane and Arnold are in frequent conversation with the British ministers: and, it is said, that the former composed part of Lord Sheffield's work; indeed, the principles of that book, are precisely the same with those contained in one of Mr. Deane's intercepted letters, in the year 1781. What kind of conduct are we to expect from Great Britain, when its councils are mixed with gall? When the acrimony of blasted ambition and avarice, are permitted to insinuate advice? I shall be happy to be aided by your counsels, during my residence in Congress. Our letters may, in this direct line of post, be secure, especially as the times are not quite so inquisitive as formerly. I beg, that my best respects may be presented to Mrs. Adams; and remember me, if you please, to General Warren, to Mr. Gerry, and Mr. Lovell. I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely and affectionately, your friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams,
Boston, Massachusetts Bay.

TRENTON, New Jersey, November 20th, 1784.

Dear Sir—I should sooner have done myself the honour of writing to you, if it had been in my power to have communicated any thing agreeable; but I could only have informed you, that we had not, and that we cannot say when we shall have, members enough to make a Congress; as yet, we

have but four states convened. This lassitude, in our public councils, must afflict our friends, and encourage the hopes of our trans-Atlantic foes, who look at us with an evil eye. Mr. Wolcott arrived here yesterday, with the treaty, made at fort Stanwix, with the Six Nations; and he informs us, that the other two commissioners have proceeded to Pittsburg, to treat with the western tribes. He thinks, (from the satisfaction that appeared among some Shawanee chiefs, who were at Fort Stanwix,) that the commissioners will not find much difficulty in their treaty with the western nations. I have the honour to enclose you a copy of the northern treaty, and shall be happy to know your opinion of it. I understand, from Mr. Wolcott, that the commissioners of the United States met many difficulties, thrown in their way by New York, which they overcame, at last, by much firmness and perseverance. It is unfortunate when private views obstruct public measures, and more especially when a state becomes opposed to the States; because, it seems to confirm the predictions of those who wish us not well, and who cherish hopes from a discord arising from different interests. Colonel Monroe, of our delegation, who is lately returned from a tour to Montreal, Niagara, and Lake Erie, informs us, that he learnt, in his journey, that the western posts were to be detained from us; and, that the reason assigned, was, because of the conduct of New York and Virginia; the former for pushing the law of confiscation beyond the terms of peace, and Virginia for not repealing the laws impeding the recovery of British debts. The governor of New York, told Colonel Monroe, that it was a mistaken charge upon them, for that they had not confiscated since the provisional articles; it is to be lamented, that any pretext should be furnished for injuring us in the essential manner that the detention of these posts will do. The Parliament, it seems, is prorogued, without touching the subject of their trade with us, although a committee of the privy council, upon the petition of the West India merchants and planters, had reported an approbation of all the silly, malignant principles of Lord Sheffield, respecting our trade with the British West Indies. This book of Lord Sheffield, has been very ably answered, by several writers, in Great Britain. My respects, if you please, to your lady; I hope that she has recovered her health.

I have the honour to be, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General Washington, Mount Vernon.

TRENTON, in New Jersey, November 20, 1784.

SIR—I wish it were in my power to give you the satisfaction that I know it would afford you, to be informed that Congress had assembled, and was proceeding well with the public business. Unfortunately, we have not yet a Congress; although twenty days are elapsed since the time appointed for its meeting, but four states have been convened. No doubt, Colonel Monroe has informed his correspondents of the intelligence he received, on his tour to Montreal, Niagara, &c. that one reason assigned for detaining the western posts from the United States, was, because Virginia had not repealed her laws impeding the recovery of British debts; it is sincerely to be wished, that the advocates for retaining those laws, would no longer insist upon furnishing pretext for detaining from the United States, possessions of such capital importance to the Union, as these posts are. I have the honour to enclose you a copy of the treaty made at fort Stanwix, with the Six Nations; it was brought here by Mr. Wolcott, who informs us, that the other two commissioners were gone to Pittsburg, to hold a treaty there with the western nations; and, he apprehends, (from the content that appeared at Stanwix, among some Shawanee chiefs,) that the commissioners will not find much difficulty in treating with the western tribes. The accounts, that we daily receive, of the powerful emigrations from our state to Georgia, North and South Carolina, and from the interior parts to Kentucky, are very alarming. The causes assigned, are two—the desire of removing from heavy taxes, and the search after land. It certainly becomes our legislature to consider this point with great attention, and to remove, or lessen, the causes that effect the depopulation of the country. Do you not think, sir, that the taxes might be considerably lessened by bringing all our debts, foreign and domestic, into view, and funding the whole. After this, let such taxes be imposed as will most punctually pay the interest, and the principal by very slow degrees. This would satisfy the public creditors, because the certainty of receiving the interest, will render the principal vendible, on good terms; and the tax might, in that case, be much lowered from its present enormous height. I think, that I may venture safely to say, that our revenue, certificate, and all other taxes, amount, in the aggregate, to a heavier taxation than prevails in any part of the world. Upon this circumstance, I find some British writers founding the hope of our depopulation. It surprised me a good deal, that our last Assembly did not take up and adopt, for the

ease of our fellow citizens, the facilities given by Congress, in their act of the 28th of April last. By this act (which, I understand, is before the Assembly) one fourth of the federal demand against us, may be discharged with certificates of interest for money loaned the United States, or for interest on liquidated debts of the United States. If these certificates were, by law, made receivable in the revenue tax, it would certainly, and considerably, facilitate the payment of that tax. It seems, that the Parliament of Great Britain was prorogued without any thing being done respecting our trade with them, although a committee of the privy council, upon the petition of the West India merchants and planters, for a free trade between them and the United States, had reported an approbation of all the silly, malignant commercial restraints upon our trade with their West India islands, that are to be found in Lord Sheffield's book, on the commerce of the two countries. I have the honour to be, with much esteem and regard, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

James Madison, Esq.
In the Assembly of Virginia.

TRENTON, Nov. 26, 1784.

Dear Sir—I received your agreeable letter the day after mine, of the 20th instant, had been despatched. I thank you for the very particular and satisfactory information that you have favoured me with. It is certainly comfortable to know that the legislature of our country is engaged in beneficial pursuits, for I conceive that the general assessment and a digest of the moral laws are very important concerns; the one to secure our peace, and the other our morals. Refiners may weave reason into as fine a web as they please, but the experience of all times shows religion to be the guardian of morals; and he must be a very inattentive observer in our country, who does not see that avarice is accomplishing the destruction of religion, for want of a legal obligation to contribute something to its support. The declaration of rights, it seems to me, rather contends against forcing modes of faith and forms of worship in religious matters, than against compelling contribution for the support of religion in general. I fully agree with the Presbyterians that true freedom embraces the Mahometan and the Gentoo, as well as the Christian religion. I believe there is no doubt but that the population of

our country depends eminently upon our revenue laws; they therefore demand intense consideration. It is natural for men to fly from oppression to ease, and whilst our taxes are extremely heavy, and North Carolina and Georgia pay little or no tax, it is not to be wondered that so many of our people flock to these states. I do not mean by this that we should not most honourably and punctually pay our debts, but I think we may fairly practise here, as other nations the most honest do; I mean exactly to pay the interest, and slowly to sink the principal; an attempt to do the latter too suddenly will ruin, by depopulating the country. The mode appears to be, a funding of the whole debt so as to certainly pay the interest and slowly the principal. Cannot a sinking fund be brought to bear upon the latter, by throwing all overflowings of taxes into a reservoir for gathering interst upon interest? I suppose that, at all events, the facilities offered by Congress in their act of 28th of April last, will be introduced into the revenue law amendments of this session. The people have certainly suffered much hitherto by not knowing, in season, what taxes are lawfully demandable from them; for want of this information, numbers are compelled to submit to the extortions and abuses of collectors. The treasurer used formerly to publish annually, in the papers, what were to be the taxes of the year, and this mode was then very useful; but at present, the dispersion of newspapers is so uncertain, that the information through that channel would reach but few. A statement from the treasury, printed in the way of handbills to be put up at the court-houses and churches, might, perhaps, furnish the requisite information, and save the people from extensive abuse.

I am very happy to know, for the honour of our country, that there is a probability of the impeding laws* being again taken under deliberation. What I wrote you, in my last, upon this subject, is a most serious consideration, and the enclosed paragraph, taken from a late paper, will show you how quickly the fame of our proceedings travels, and the effect that they are likely to have upon our commerce. By the fifth article of the confederation, the annual meeting of Congress is to be on the first Monday in November, and by our act establishing one yearly meeting of the Assembly, and that to be on the third Monday in October, you will see, sir, that there is very little probability of Virginia being represented in Congress for some time after its federal day of meeting, so that it becomes necessary to consider this matter.

* Impeding the recovery of British debts.

I suppose that either the Assembly's time of meeting must be altered, or the delegates for the ensuing federal year be chosen this session. We have not yet made a Congress, but we have some reason to expect eight states on Monday next. I understand that Spain is likely to insist upon the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, which will render the exploring our western waters of the greater importance.

I am, dear sir,
With great esteem and regard,
Your most obedient and very humble servant.
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

JAMES MADISON, Esq.

TRENTON, Dec. 18, 1784.

DEAR SIR—We are placed now, I think, pretty nearly in the same political relation under which our former correspondence was conducted; if it shall prove as agreeable to you to revive it, as you were then pleased to say it was to continue it, I shall be happy in contributing my part. The intelligence from hence cannot now be so interesting as formerly, because important events can be expected to occur but seldom in these times. It is, however, not unpleasant to know how things are going, and likely to go, in the world; that part of it, at least, in which we are in any manner interested. The courts of Spain and London do not seem to be upon such cordial principles with the United States as we might wish; the former seeming to be intent upon possessing, with a strong hand, the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, and the latter has actually encroached already upon our peace boundary on the river St. Croix, and they detain the western posts; assigning, for reason, that we have violated the peace by not repealing the laws that impede the recovery of British debts; the court of London seems also willing to injure its own possessions in the West Indies, rather than not wound our commerce with the British Isles. Much of this mischief arises from the want of a proper understanding of each other, and from the active industry and acrimonious misinformation that the exiled tories and refugees are constantly inculcating and asserting, without much danger of contradiction in having the truth fairly displayed. A well-informed gentleman, in our ministry abroad, therefore, lately wrote us, that we could much better have dealt with these people among ourselves, than we can counteract the evils now resulting from their conduct abroad. This temper of the two courts will, how-

ever, produce the necessity of sending to each a well-informed proper minister to negotiate commencing difficulties, and thereby prevent the evils of renewed war. It seems yet to be a matter of much doubt, whether the imperial determination to open the long closed navigation of the Scheldt, and restoring Antwerp to its former splendour as a commercial city, will not light up a general war upon the continent of Europe. I hope that our dispute with Great Britain may be previously settled. Our commissioners have concluded a peace with the Six Nations, and are now on their way to Cayahoga, on Lake Erie, to meet the western nations and to make a treaty with them also. I present you the compliments of the approaching season, and assure you that

I am, with great regard and esteem,
Dear sir,
Your most obedient and very humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. E. Pendleton,
Virginia.

TRENTON, Dec. 26, 1784.

Dear Sir—I had the honour to receive your obliging letter, of the 14th inst., seven days after its date, and I thank you, sir, for its friendly contents and sensible communications. You ideas concerning the western country are wise and just; they will certainly have great weight when that business shall be discussed in Congress, and that will probably be the case soon after we know the success of our commissioners at Cayahoga. Much time hath been taken up in the debate upon the permanent and temporary residence of Congress, and, finally, it is determined that the former shall be on the banks of the Delaware, not exceeding eight miles above or below this place, and on either side of the river that may be fixed upon by commissioners to be appointed for the purpose of superintending the federal buildings. New-York is to be the temporary residence, and Congress stands now adjourned to meet in that city on the 11th of January next, when I hope that we shall diligently put forward the public business. Spain seems determined to possess the exclusive navigation of Mississippi, which, with the bickerings that appear already on that quarter, will oblige Congress to send an able minister to Madrid, and one also to the court of London, that we may, if possible, negotiate commencing differences before they have proceeded too far. The western posts are withheld.

and an encroachment already made on our north-eastern boundary. The ambiguity in the treaty, arising from there being two rivers named St. Croix that empty into Passamaquady bay, has encouraged the British to settle the country between them, which is valuable, and I understand that, in the upper parts, these waters are distant seventy miles from each other; the fact is, that the easternmost river is the true St. Croix, the same name having been, of late date, only applied to the westernmost of these waters. The very unfriendly commercial principles entertained by the British ministry, and the disputes concerning debts and removed negroes, are points of consequence also; which together form a field for able and ample negotiation.

The Marquis Fayette had embarked for Europe before the letter for him, that you enclosed, came to my hands. I should be glad to know your pleasure concerning it; whether I am to send it on to France after him, or return it to you. My respectful compliments attend your lady, and wishing you and her the compliments of the season,

I am, with great esteem and regard,
Dear sir,
Your most obedient and very humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Gen. WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, January 20, 1785.

SIR—I have the honour to send your excellency two letters that came under cover from France. 'Tis with pleasure I learn from Mr. Adams, that it is probable the negotiations of this winter may prevent the progress of hostilities in the spring, between the United Netherlands, and the emperor. And also that the spirits of your countrymen suffer no dejection, but that on the contrary, they are with much diligence and wisdom composing party quarrels, and preparing for the defence of the republic. Be so good as to present my compliments to your son, and be assured that I am, with every sentiment of esteem and regard sir, your excellency's most obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency Mr. VAN BACKLE,
Minister Plenipotentiary from the
United Netherlands.

NEW YORK, February 14, 1785.

DEAR SIR—In reply to your favour of December 14th, I had the honour to write to you from Trenton, and I mentioned an enclosed letter from you, for the Marquis Fayette, which coming to hand after the marquis had sailed, I wished to know your pleasure, whether I should forward it to France, or return it to you. I have not been honoured with your commands on that point. Soon after my arrival in this city, I enclosed for you, in a letter, one of the few pamphlets addressed to the president of Congress, by Doctor Price, and I shall be happy to know that you have received it. I have now the pleasure, to send you a copy of the treaty this day received from the commissioners appointed to treat with the Western Indians. The Shawanese, you observe, are not there. And what effect this may have I am not able to say; but the Wyandots are stated as their superiors, from whence we may hope no very ill effects from their absence. The Court of Spain has appointed Mr. Gardoque their charge des affairs to the United States, and we have reason soon to expect his arrival. We are to apprehend a very firm ostensible demand from him, of the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi. His private orders touching our ulterior agreement may be another thing; time and wise negotiation, will unfold this very important matter to the United States, and to many individual states. My respects if you please to your lady. I have the honour to be with the truest respect and esteem dear sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, February 14, 1785.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of December 9th, has just now been put into my hands, together with the printed papers that you were pleased to send me, but I have not yet had the pleasure of finding Colonel Grayson here. I do sincerely wish to see my country flourish and be happy, so that if by any means in my power, I can contribute to this most desirable end, I shall certainly exert myself. No time or circumstance, can ever force from my mind, the sincere affection that I entertain for the original friends, to the just rights of America, whose wise and firm perseverance, has secured to the United States at least the blessings, without which, there

is little difference between men and brutes. The ill state of health that I contracted at Richmond in May 1783, still afflicts me, which, added to the business and the ceremony of my present office* afflicts me much, and must necessarily prevent me from such frequent communications, as otherwise I should undoubtedly make. With respect to official intelligence from Europe, we have none of great consequence; Mr. Adams thinks, that the negotiations of this winter will probably accommodate the difference between the emperor, and the United Netherlands, and our charge des affairs at Madrid, informs us that the court of Spain has appointed Mr. Gardoque, to come here as their minister and we expect him daily. His purpose is to treat of commerce, and territorial limits. Our ministers at Paris are generally proposing treaties of amity and commerce, with all the European commercial powers, and they receive answers very civil, but as yet no treaties formed, except such as you have seen notified from Congress. As you have been pleased to desire my reflections upon the state of affairs, I will give them freely, as they appear to me. The courts with which we are most immediately concerned, are Spain, England, France, and Holland: the two first, because we border on them, and because we have with each most pressing difficulty; the two last, because we are indebted to them both on the score of money lent, and friendship in other ways conferred. Spain is proud, and extremely jealous of our approximation to her South American territory, and fearing the example of our ascendency upon that country, is grasping forever at more territory, by way of security; and hoping to derive benefit to her system, from our want of system, our discord and inattention. Hence we may expect from Mr. Gardoque, an apparent firm demand of the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, with some tempting commercial offers, to procure our assent to the loss of this very valuable navigation. But probably, the apprehension of a quarrel with us, and the effect of it upon their South American possessions, may secure to us, if we are wise and firm, the free navigation, to be finally agreed to by Spain; with Great Britain, our difficulties will be greater; equally proud with Spain, and much more powerful, with fewer reasons to fear a rupture with us, and more to hope from a successful one; she remains sullen after defeat, and seeming to wish for just provocation to renew the combat. The passions of states, and of individuals, are not very different; for what are the former, but a compound of individuals, and of course carrying into the composition, those

* President of Congress.

leading principles that characterize the parts. In private life, a wise and fortunate victor, over great strength, would, in all his conduct with the vanquished, show a respectful civility, avoiding every display of supposed superiority, and carefully shunning every appearance of giving cause for fresh offence. It seems to me, that if the conduct of America, had been founded on such principles our magnanimity must have been confessed, and that the seeds of future discord, would not have been so effectually sown as I fear they are. Both countries have been to blame, and transgressions against the terms of peace were on each side coeval, so that whilst we charged them with removing the slaves from New York, they pointed to the violence with which their friends were every where treated, with the detention of their debts, and with actions here brought against those who possessed houses in this city, whilst it was in their power by the fortune of war. This again is followed by their detention of the western posts, by their encroachments on our north-eastern boundary about St Croix, and by their unfriendly interruption of our commerce, and lately by arresting in London a merchant of Philadelphia for debt, because his privateer had taken, during the war, a vessel belonging to the complainant. This is an unpleasant state of things, and if temper and wisdom are not employed on both sides, it is not difficult to foresee a renewed rupture ere long. The principles of republics being virtuous, and their conduct therefore squaring with justice, they rather negotiate differences than fight them. Monarchies depend too much upon the *ultima ratio regum*. When we have acted fully up to our principle, we shall be upon strong ground to combat theirs. But the cause of virtue, without proper means to support it, must often fail. These considerations lead me to wish most sincerely that my country may quickly cease to give the smallest cause for just offence, and that our rulers would engrave upon their minds, the wisdom of the inscription upon the arsenal of Berne in Switzerland—That people happy are, who, during peace, prepare the necessary stores for war.

It is in vain for us to expect this from the United States—to be secure, each state must provide amply for itself; and whenever Great Britain shall find us just, temperate, and prepared, she will be extremely cautious of hostile aggressions, or of unjust treatment of us. If this reasoning is right, how will your excellency's administration be marked for wisdom, if effectual attention be paid to the collection and preservation of military stores; I have here been informed, by an officer of rank in the continental artillery, at the sur-

render of York, that several pieces of our artillery were retaken from the enemy, and that they are now at Philadelphia; it deserves to be considered, whether these are not subject to be returned to us, upon demand of the state: there were also several pieces of our artillery, thrown into Pamunkey river, near New Castle, in 1781, and some other pieces fixed in the ground, and in vain attempted to be destroyed by the enemy. Baron Steuben lately sent us the enclosed letter, which I have now the honour to transmit; his published plan, is only an outline, but the details by which that plan is to be executed, he professes himself willing to communicate, when the state of Virginia shall call upon him, for them. The sum of this, (I fear, too long digression, upon our relative situation with Great Britain,) is, that being secure of having done right, we should be fully prepared to meet aggressions from that quarter; a sentiment founded upon an attentive consideration of the correspondence, between the British generals, during the late war, by which it is not difficult to discover, that experience had instructed them in this truth, that a war against the United States, had better be pushed in full force at first against Virginia. I have before observed to your excellency, that Mr. Adams thought we might expect a compromise between Holland and the emperor, from the negotiations of this winter; it is certain, that every influence of France, will be used to effect the compromise, for reasons very obvious: but, whilst the emperor demands a preliminary, that the Scheldt shall be opened, and Holland as peremtorily says, that it must not, it remains possible, but not probable, that an accommodation may take place: if it does not, the powers on the continent will be engaged in a most expensive war, whilst, as it seems, Great Britain will remain neuter, and by peace, preparing herself for war, render her hostile views, more dangerous to us. The apprehension of this difficulty, on the part of our friends, has probably produced the strong intimations that we must be exact in the payment of our interest upon the foreign loans; and the same reason does indeed call upon the United States, in the strongest sense, to be punctual in their payments, that those who have assisted us, in the day of our distres, may not suffer for their generosity.

The attention of Congress, has been applied to our western concerns, as your excellency will see by the treaties made with the Six Nations, and the western Indians; in the latter, the Shawanese are not included, but their being prevented by some active British emissary, from coming to the latter treaty, will probably not be attended with ill consequences,

as they are very much under the control of the Six Nations, and of the Wyandots, their powerful neighbours. The spring will open further treaties with the more southern tribes, north-west of the Ohio, and also, on the south-eastern side upon ours, and the frontiers of North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

Judging from myself, I suppose your excellency will be tired with the length of this letter, and if you will pardon it, I promise you, that I will not again transgress in the same manner. I have the honour to be, with sentiments of esteem, respect, and regard, sir, your excellency's most ob't serv't,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency, Gov. Henry.

NEW YORK, March 14th, 1785.

My dear Sir—Your favours (for I am always favoured when you are pleased to write to me) by Mr. Walker of the 9th, and by Captain Landaes of the 10th of December, were duly delivered to me by those gentlemen, and, without loss of time, I laid them before Congress, and their applications have been referred to very good committees, so that there is reason to expect, that these gentlemen will receive just and satisfactory determinations from Congress. Your friendly and sensible letter of the 23d of the same month, deserves my sincerest thanks and approbation, which, with great cordiality, I present to you. My ill health, (with much business, and the necessary attention to the ceremonies of my office,) prevents me from being so punctual a correspondent as I wish to be; but I well know, that your goodness will excuse me. It is the part of a friend to advise, and of a well disposed mind to profit from good counsel; I shall certainly endeavour to benefit from your judicious sentiments. Very much it is to be wished, that all who are in authority, discerned with you, that the eyes of the world are upon us; that great expectations are formed from great beginnings, and that wisdom and virtue, can alone satisfy such just expeetations. It is, however, much too correspondent with human nature, to exult beyond measure, and thereby to neglect those duties, which ought to inspire better sentiments; to this cause may, perhaps, be attributed much of the inattention and violence, that have too generally taken place, since the preliminary articles were made known to us. Whether in public or in private life, it seems most becoming wise men, in the time of victory and success, to practise the virtues of magnanimity and justice—to avoid the display of irascible passions, by

effectually "burying the hatchet," as our aborigines express the idea; without this philosophic temper, what would become of mankind, governed as they too generally are, by tyrants, whose caprice forces nations into war? endless carnage, and evil without bounds must be the result. The philanthropy, that I revere and admire in your character, must revolt at the contemplation of it, and I think, that the Christian philanthropy in tenderness for human infirmities, strongly inculcates principles of mutual benefit and forgiveness. These reflections have been created in my mind, by that kind of exultation "beyond measure," which you so wisely deprecate, and which I have seen so much to prevail, as to injure in my idea, that greatness of character which had dignified America in her resistance to British tyranny; for I am not disposed to admit revenge as a just plea for such extravagancies, although a well judged system of measured politics may be admissible. The selfishness and corruption of Europe I have no doubt about; and therefore I wish most sincerely, that our free republics may not suffer themselves to be changed, and wrongfully wrought upon, by the corrupt maxims of policy, that pervade European councils, where artful and refined plausibility is forever called in, to aid the most pernicious designs. It would seem as if there were a general jealousy beyond the water, of the powerful effects to be derived from republican virtue here, and so we hear a constant cry from thence, echoed and re-echoed here, by all expectants from the treasury of the United States, that Congress must have more power; that we cannot be secure and happy, until Congress commands implicitly both purse and sword: so that our confederation must be perpetually changing, to answer sinister views in the greater part, until every fence is thrown down, that was designed to protect and cover the rights of mankind.

It is a melancholy consideration that many wise and good men have, some how or other, fallen in with these ruinous opinions. I think, sir, that the first maxim of a man who loves liberty should be, never to grant to rulers an atom of power that is not most clearly and indispensably necessary for the safety and well being of society. To say that these rulers are revocable and holding their places during pleasure, may not be supposed to design evil for self aggrandizement, is affirming what I cannot easily admit. Look to history, and see how often the liberties of mankind have been oppressed and ruined by the same delusive hopes, and fallacious reasoning. The fact is, that power poisons the mind of its possessor, and aids him to remove the shackles that restrain

it. To be sure, all things human must partake of human infirmity, and therefore the confederation should not be presumptuously called an infallible system for all times and all situations; but though this is true, yet as it is a great and fundamental system of union and security, no change should be admitted until proved to be necessary by the fairest, fullest and most mature experience. Upon these principles I have ever been opposed to the five per cent. impost. My idea is still that of the confederation fixing the sum, apportioning it, and letting every state by its own means and in its own way, faithfully and honestly make its payments. That the now federal mode of apportionment is productive of delay, of great expense, and still liable to frequent change, is certain, and therefore I see no inconvenience in so far altering the confederation as to make the rule of apportionment be upon the numbers, as stated in the recommendation of Congress, upon that subject. But I can never agree, that this body shall dictate the mode of taxation, or that the collection shall in any manner be subject to congressional control. It is said that this will more effectually secure the revenue; but how so? If a spirit prevails to neglect a duty imposed by the confederation, may not the same spirit at any time render abortive acts passed for granting the impost? besides that, we are depending for the payment of our debts upon uncertainty, when the most certain revenues of the state ought to be appropriated to that purpose. Whilst every good man wishes great punctuality to prevail in the payment of debts, he must at the same time condemn and discourage large importations, which impoverish by increasing the balance of trade against us; so that from this system we are to expect our greatest good from our greatest evil! A good physician will tell you that contrary indications of cure threaten danger to human life; and, by a just parity of reason, contrary indications threaten danger to the political body; but happily for us, our political disease admits of simple remedies for its cure, if rightly judged of and wisely practised upon. Let it therefore be the effort of every patriot to encourage a punctual payment of each state's quota of the federal demand, and let the money be found in ways most agreeable to the circumstances of every state. This is the plan of the confederation, and this I own will be mine, until more satisfactory experience has proved its inefficacy. A word more upon the point of our just wishes to be detached from the European politics, and European vices, of course, I wish it most sincerely; but unfortunately, Great Britain is upon our northern quarter, and Spain upon the southern; we are there-

fore compelled to mix with their councils in order to be guarded against their ill designs. I am very happy to hear from my friend Mr. Lovell, that you are in health and spirits, and that you still delight to speak of politics; there is nothing in this life that would give me more happiness than to see and converse with you in Boston; but alas, I fear that my poor state of health will deny me this pleasure; but at all times and in every place, I shall be, dear sir, your most affectionate friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams.

NEW YORK, April 18, 1785.

Dear Sir—I should before this have thanked you for your favour of March 15th, if I had not been in daily expectation that the arrival of the packets would bring us some intelligence from Europe worth communicating to you; the February packet has but just come in after a passage of eight weeks, and neither she or other vessels in short passages, bring us any thing interesting. War or peace in Europe, hangs yet in doubtful balance; both parties arming with assiduity, and nothing determined upon. Mr. John Adams, is sent plenipotentiary to the court of London, and Mr. Jefferson is the minister at Versailles, Dr. Franklin having leave, at his own request, to retire. Returning appearances of good humour, and a proposition first made by the British court, to treat of our differences in London, has induced hopes of an amicable adjustment of disputes. Mr. Gardoque is not arrived, but expected about the last of this month from the Havana, to which place he went from Spain previous to his coming here. If the commenced bickering between Madrid and London on the Musquito shore should go on, we may probably have easier work with both courts in our business with them. I have the honour to enclose you the report of a respectable committee on the subject of selling the western lands, which has not yet been acted upon, though it speedily will. What changes may be made in this plan before it finally passes, cannot yet be told, but probably there will be some. Your idea of settling a state at a time, would most certainly be the wisest and the best, if the excessive rage for taking lands there could be possibly restrained. But really it seems that either Congress must sell quickly, or possession will be so taken as to render doubtful this fine fund for extinguishing the public debt. It has been impossi-

ble to get a vote for more than seven hundred men to garrison all the posts to be fixed in the trans-Alleghanian country, from north to south; a number very inadequate, I fear, to the purpose of even suppressing illegal trespasses upon the western lands. Our friend the Marquis La Fayette, arrived after a short passage, but I believe it was a very boisterous one. Your letter for Mr. Lee I sent after him to Virginia, whither he was returning before I received it. My best respects attend your lady.

I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servt.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General Washington.

NEW-YORK, May 16th, 1785.

Sir—I thank you for your obliging congratulation on my appointment to the chair of Congress, and I do, with particular pleasure, return my congratulation on your sole appointment as minister of the United States, to so eminently respectable a court as that of his most Christian Majesty. My ill state of health, added to the business and the ceremonies of my office, have hitherto prevented me from paying my respects to you, which certainly would not have been the case if the former of these circumstances had not principally prevented me. Although my health is now better, yet I am very far from being well. I can judge how anxious you must be for minute information of public proceedings in the United States, and of such other matters as your letter imparts a desire to be acquainted with; but, unfortunately, all letters are inspected, and thus the impertinent eye of curiosity may be gratified with such communications as were intended only for you, and which wicked selfishness may make a bad use of. This imposes great restraint, which will remain until Congress shall establish a system of packets and couriers of their own. How detestable is this dishonourable mode of obtaining intelligence. The virtue of Lord Falkland, when secretary of state, would never suffer him to obtain information by such nefarious means. The appointment of Mr. Adams to the court of London will, probably, draw out quickly the sense of Great Britain upon the points in dispute with them. And the authority, given by Congress, to treat with the piratical states will, I hope, accommodate all difference with them, and give future security to our commerce with the south of Europe. I am much obliged to you for the pamphlet. I

think it is greatly to be regretted, that the avaricious monopolizing spirit of commerce and commercial men, should be suffered to interrupt that diffusion of benefits and communication between the human species in different parts of the world, which would, probably, take place if trade were put upon more liberal principles, and less shackled than it is. The first attempt made, by these states, for the trade of the East Indies, was from this city. A ship has gone to and returned from Canton, in fourteen months, with a valuable cargo, and met with the most friendly treatment from the Chinese. Other vessels are gone and soon expected back. The great object with the United States now, is to dispose speedily of the western lands for the discharge of public debt, and a way for this is opened by treaties already made and making with the Indians. Coinage, requisition, and post-offices are also objects of great moment and subjects of discussion. Effectual measures are taken by the assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, and by the former alone, for opening the navigation between the Potomac and James rivers with the western waters. Laws, with suspending clauses, have passed in Virginia for establishing a single post on each river, and for circuit courts. A general assessment for religion is also a subject of much discussion with us. Mr. P. Henry is our governour, and Col. Harrison has lost his election in his own county of James City. Great and general efforts have been made to get into the legislature during the late elections, and I hear that there are many changes. It remains uncertain whether Congress will adjourn or not this year; but as I value extremely your correspondence, your letters for me may always be safely enclosed to the Virginia delegates in Congress, so that whether Congress or the committee of states should be sitting, your letters will reach me safely. Be so good as to thank Mr. Short for his letter to me, and inform him that I will reply by the next packet. I heartily wish your health and happiness, and

I am, with the truest esteem and regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Mr. Jefferson,
Minister Plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles.

NEW YORK, June 11th, 1785.

My dear Sir—I have been lately honoured with your letter of March 16th, from Paris, and I thank you for it; as I feel myself much interested in your happiness, so your letter gave me singular pleasure, when it informed me of your "being well and happy, with your family and friends," and the more so, because a rumor had prevailed, of some accident having happened at sea, to the frigate that carried you from hence. It is with great satisfaction, that I consider any action of my life, that has proved agreeable to you, and I am very sure, that the good you have done for my country, has much more than repaid my attentions to you. I am pleased that you think of coming to see us again; it is certain, that numbers will be made happy here, when ever you are pleased to visit these United States. Much praise is due to those, by whose humanity, and powerful agency, a war in Europe has been prevented, for had it taken place, I apprehend that the evil would have been great and very extensive. It is unfortunate for the friendly intercourse, and general benefit of mankind, that the avaricious spirit of commerce, always aiming at monopoly, should be permitted to interpose such obstructions as too frequently take place in the intercourse of nations, much to the injury of human nature, in general. It seems to me, that whilst the European nations have it in their power, to supply these states so largely with manufactures, that it is unwise to adopt such regulations as cramp the American trade, and thereby render us incapable of purchasing, and paying for, those manufactures in so extensive a manner, as would certainly be done, if commercial restraints were removed; this conduct on the part of Europe tends to injure their manufactures, by lessening their sales, at the same time, that it very much forces the Americans from agriculture to arts, thus rendering scarcer and dearer, the American productions that are wanted in Europe, and lessening the use of European manufactures in America, which it should be the policy of Europe to encourage the use of. It is very obvious, why the merchants of France, have not so great a share of our commerce as they wish; the staple states, or those which have much valuable produce to export, have at present but few ships and seamen of their own, and consequently, do not now export themselves much of their own produce; those nations, therefore, that push the trade with them, by sending ships and merchandise to them, will for the reason above, certainly possess at this time, the greatest share of their trade; so that the fact is, that

the British merchants, are those chiefly, who bring us the cambricks and many other manufactures of France, which the French merchants failed to export themselves, although they might afford to sell them cheaper and better, than the English, and of course drive the latter from this branch of trade at least. The plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, goes on well—already more than 40,000 pounds are subscribed for opening the Potomac, and General Washington, is chosen president of the society, that superintends that business. The settling a mode for surveying and selling the fine country, north-west of Ohio river, for the purpose of discharging our public debt, is an object that hath engaged much attention of Congress, and promises, we think, in due season, to remove the debts created by the last war. Mr. Gardoque, from Spain, is arrived at Philadelphia, and we daily expect him in this city; it is to be hoped, that the good sense and honour of his court, will finally settle into such measures, as are just and reasonable. I have the honour to be, my dear sir, with sentiments of the truest affection, esteem and regard,

Your most obedient and very humble servant.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Marquis De la Fayette, at Paris.

NEW YORK, October 23d, 1785.

Dear Sir—I received the letter, that you did me the honour to write me, on the 15th July, with the pleasure that always accompanies the receipt of letters, from my old and much esteemed friend. I see with pleasure, that your reception at the court of London, has been such, as to promise you an agreeable residence there, which may be somewhat pleasant, although you should unfortunately fail in the principal objects of your mission; this last, however, I yet hope will not be the case, since you represent the majority of the ministry, as able, and thinking rightly with respect to us. The national mind, cannot continue long under the delusion, created by the most vindictive and abominable characters in the world. I mean the tory refugees, who by themselves, and by those, who for sinister purposes, have suffered themselves to be imposed on by those people, are industriously keeping up on both sides of the water, a contentious and mischievous spirit, to the great hurt of both countries. We know them here, and by this time, they ought to be known in England, to which country, they have caused by their misrepresenta-

tion, such infinite evil. In the mind of a person acquainted with the true state of things, there can remain no doubt, but that this moment is the most favourable one that will probably occur again, for Great Britain, to make a favourable treaty of commerce with these United States. The events that took place immediately succeeding the war, and which have produced such wrong conclusions, touching the British secure possession of our commerce, cannot prevent our trade from going, as it is fast proceeding to do, into other channels, where it is driven, by the mistaken discouragements that are imposed by Britain. I have myself no doubt, but that smart duties of tonnage will be laid by all the states, on the vessels of those nations with whom we have not commercial treaties, and that such will be prohibited, from importing into our ports, productions or manufactures, not the growth or manufacture, of the country importing them; thus, those states, forced into it by the folly and intemperance of Great Britain, and led by her example, will be forming laws to discourage a commerce which might be so mutually beneficial, if wisdom and temper, were to take place of passion and folly. The project of a treaty, proposed by you, to the court where you are, is so perfectly just, and will be so greatly beneficial to both, that I cannot help hoping, it will yet be agreed to. I am greatly obliged to you, for your goodness, respecting Mr. Steptoe, and I entreat, that you will so have him in your mind, as, that you may effectually promote his views, whensoever an opportunity will present. Much harmony has prevailed this year in Congress, and I hope, that the same concord will continue. The present federal year, being on the point of ending, I shall return to Virginia, and as I mentioned in a former letter, you may write very securely to me, under the care of Messrs. Wallace, Johnston, and Muir, merchants in London, who will safely forward your letters. I am, with the most sincere and perfect esteem and regard, sir, your most obliged friend, and obedient humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon John Adams, Esq.
Minister Plenipo. to the Court of London.

NEW YORK, 30th October, 1785.

I thank you, my dear marquis, for your very affectionate letter, by Mr. Houdon; that gentleman arrived in Philadelphia, and proceeded immediately to Mount Vernon; he

has been ever since with General Washington, so that I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing him in this city. It is very happy for America, that events of such high importance should have taken place here as to invite artists, of Mr. Houdon's great reputation, to visit us. I hope that he will find every thing here agreeable to his wishes. As I take strong part in every thing that conduces to your happiness, so I have contemplated with pleasure, the great satisfaction you must have received at the review of those excellent troops of the emperor and of Prussia. A philosophic mind is apt, however, to regret that such fine exertions of human art should so often be employed for the destruction of the human species. I will comfort myself here by hoping, that these will be used to suppress and control, not to promote the bad purposes of ambition. It raises high the glory of Louis the Sixteenth, that his reign has been so eminent for promoting the good of mankind, whilst sovereigns in general, employ their power to increase the miseries of human nature! Will it not happen, during the reign of this glorious monarch, that those lawless pirates, upon the African coast of the Mediterranean, will be compelled, by some proper system, to respect the rights of men, and the laws of nations, instead of receiving annual stipends for not doing what it is really infamous to do. I mean roaming about to injure, oppress, and destroy, their unoffending fellow creatures. Among the many leagues that are formed, why may not one be made for the purpose of protecting the rights of humanity. I hope, sir, that you have not forgotten your design, again to make us happy, by your return to these United States.

I have the honour to be, with sentiments of the highest affection and friendship, my dear marquis,

Your most ob't and very humble serv't.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Marquis De La Fayette.

CHANTILLY, Virginia, December 3d, 1785.

Dear Sir—It is with great pleasure that I embrace this opportunity of saluting you, by my friend and relation Colonel Henry Lee, who is going to Congress, a member of that body. I hope he will find you in good health, and still growing better, for I am sure that it will conduce much to the good of Spain, and this country, that his Catholic majesty should continue to be represented here by a gentleman who has so good a knowledge of both countries, with so candid a

desire to benefit both by the knowledge he possesses. My return to Congress, in the course of the coming year, will depend so much upon the state of my health, that I dare not say yet, how it will be; but, certainly, it will add much to my happiness to have the pleasure of seeing you again. I pray God to bless you long with health and every happiness; and being, with considerations of the highest respect and esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency Don Diego de Gardoque,
Plenipotentiary encargo do de negotior,
of his Catholic majesty, to the United States.

CHANTILLY, March 5th, 1786.

Sir—It is certainly true that a *popular government* cannot flourish without *virtue* in the people, and it is as true that *knowledge* is a principal source of virtue; these facts render the establishment of schools, for the instruction of youth, a fundamental concern in all free communities. I wish that it had been made a primary duty of the legislature, by our constitution, as it has been wisely done by some of the states in this union. Such establishments will be the surest means of perpetuating our free forms of government, for, when men are taught to know, and well to understand, the great inherent rights of human nature, they will take care not to suffer the hands of vice, of violence, or of ignorance, to rob them of such inestimable blessings. You may suppose, sir, that, with these sentiments, I see with pleasure every attempt to establish seminaries of learning, and that my endeavours shall not be wanting to promote the laudable purpose, by every means in my power. You say there are several beautiful situations on Spicer's tenement, for the purpose of the proposed academy, and that he is willing to part with any two acres for that use. I do hereby, sir, declare to you, and assure the other gentlemen concerned with you in the establishment of this academy, that whenever Randall Spicer's consent for this purpose, shall be tendered me in writing, and a fee simple deed be offered me to sign, for conveying a clear and effectual fee simple right in any such two acres, for the sole use of a public school, or seminary of learning, and for no other use or purpose whatsoever, I will sign and execute such deed with pleasure, and desire

no other gratuity but the satisfaction that I shall receive in knowing the salutary effects that will be derived to the good people of Fauquier in particular, and the community in general, from so useful an establishment. With my respects to all the gentlemen concerned in this praiseworthy business, I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Colonel MARTIN PICKETT, Fauquier.

CHANTILLY, May 15th, 1787.

DEAR SIR—It has given me much pleasure to be informed that General Washington and yourself, have gone to the convention. We may hope, from such efforts, that alterations beneficial will take place in our federal constitution, if it shall be found, on deliberate inquiry, that the evils now felt do flow from errors in that constitution; but, alas! sir, I fear it is more in vicious manners, than mistakes in form, that we must seek for the causes of the present discontent. The present causes of complaint seem to be, that Congress cannot command the money necessary for the just purposes of paying debts, or for supporting the federal government; and that they cannot make treaties of commerce, unless power unlimited, of regulating trade, be given. The confederation now gives right to name the sums necessary, and to apportion the quotas by a rule established. This rule is, unfortunately, very difficult of execution, and, therefore, the recommendations of Congress on this subject, have not been made in federal mode; so that states have thought themselves justified in non-compliance. If the rule were plain and easy, and refusal were then to follow demand, I see clearly, that no form of government whatever, short of force, will answer; for the same want of principle that produces neglect now, will do so under any change not supported by power compulsory; the difficulty certainly is, how to give this power in such manner as that it may only be used to good, and not abused to bad, purposes. Whoever shall solve this difficulty will receive the thanks of this and future generations. With respect to the want of power to make treaties of trade, for want of legislation, to regulate the general commerce, it appears to me, that the right of making treaties, and the legislative power contended for, are essentially different things; the former may be given and executed, without the danger attending upon the states parting with their legisla-

tive authority, in the instance contended for. If the third paragraph of the sixth article were altered, by striking out the words, in pursuance of any treaties already proposed by Congress, to the courts of France and Spain; and the proviso stricken out of the first section in the ninth article, Congress would then have a complete and unlimited right of making treaties of all kinds, and, so far, I really think it both right and necessary; but this is very different from, and in danger far short of, giving an exclusive power of regulating trade. A minister of Congress may go to a foreign court with full power to make a commercial treaty; but if he were to propose to such court that the eight northern states in this union, should have the exclusive right of carrying the products of the five southern states, or of supplying these states with foreign articles: such a proposition of monopoly would be rejected; and, therefore, no danger here from the power of making treaty; but a legislative right to regulate trade through the states, may, in a thousand artful modes, be so abused as to produce the monopoly aforesaid, to the extreme oppression of the staple states, as they are called. I do not say that this would be done, but I contend that it might be done; and, where interest powerfully prompts, it is greatly to be feared that it would be done. Whoever has served long in Congress, knows, that the restraint of making the consent of nine states necessary, is feeble and incompetent. Some will sometimes sleep, and some will be negligent, but it is certain that improper power not given, cannot be improperly used. The human mind is too apt to rush from one extreme to another; it appears, by the objections that came from the different states, when the confederation was submitted for consideration, that the universal apprehension was, of the too great, not the defective powers of Congress. Whence this immense change of sentiment, in a few years? for now the cry is power, give Congress power. Without reflecting that every free nation, that hath ever existed, has lost its liberty by the same rash impatience, and want of necessary caution. I am glad, however, to find, on this occasion, that so many gentlemen, of competent years, are sent to the convention, for, certainly, "youth is the season of credulity, and confidence a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom." The states have been so unpardonably remiss, in furnishing their federal quotas, as to make impost necessary, for a term of time, with a provisional security, that the money arising shall be unchangeably applied to the payment of their public debts: that accounts of the application, shall be annually sent to each state; and the collecting officers appointed by,

and be amenable to the states: or, if not so, very strong preventives and correctives of official abuse and misconduct, interpose, to shield the people from oppression. Give me leave, sir, to detain you a moment longer, with a proposition that I have not heard mentioned. It is that the right of making paper money shall be exclusively vested in Congress; such a right will be clearly within the spirit of the fourth section of the ninth article of the present confederation. This appears to me, to be a restraint of the last importance to the peace and happiness of the Union, and of every part of it. Knaves assure, and fools believe, that calling paper money, and making it tender, is the way to be rich and happy; thus the national mind is kept in constant ferment; and the public councils in continual disturbance by the intrigues of wicked men, for fraudulent purposes, for speculating designs. This would be a great step towards correcting morals, and suppressing legislative frauds, which, of all frauds, is the most fatal to society. Do you not think, sir, that it ought to be declared, by the new system, that any state act of legislation that shall contravene, or oppose, the authorized acts of Congress, or interfere with the expressed rights of that body, shall be *ipso facto* void, and of no force whatsoever. My respects, if you please, to your brethren of the convention, from this state, and pardon me for the liberty I have taken of troubling you with my sentiments on the interesting business that calls you to Philadelphia. I have the honour to be, with affectionate esteem and regard,

Your friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

GEORGE MASON, Esq.

NEW YORK, July 28, 1787.

SIR—Your brother transmitted to me the valuable present that you were pleased to make me of your excellent book on the diseases of seamen, which I have read with much pleasure and instruction. It is certainly a business of great philanthropy to contribute to the health and ease of so valuable and so exposed a part of our species. I pray you, sir, to accept of my thanks for your politeness, and give me leave to assure you, that I am with much esteem and regard, sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Dr. BLANE, Physician to his royal highness
the Prince of Wales, &c. &c. &c.

NEW YORK, October 5, 1787.

DEAR SIR—Having long toiled with you, my dear friend, in the vineyard of liberty, I do with great pleasure submit to your wisdom and patriotism, the objections that prevail in my mind against the new constitution proposed for federal government: which objections I did propose to Congress in form of amendments to be discussed, and such as were approved, to be forwarded to the states with the convention system. You will have been informed, by other hands, why these amendments were not considered and do not appear on the journals, and the reasons that influenced a bare transmission of the convention plan, without a syllable of approbation or disapprobation on the part of Congress. I suppose, my dear sir, that the people of the United States, in their late generous contests, contended for free government in the fullest, clearest, and strongest sense: that they had no idea of being brought under despotic rule, under the notion of strong government, or in form of elective despotism: chains being still chains, whether made of gold or iron.

The corrupting nature of power and its insatiable appetite for increase, has proved the necessity, and procured the adoption of the strongest and most express declarations of that *residuum* of natural rights, which is not intended to be given up to society, and which indeed is not necessary to be given for any good social purpose. In a government, therefore, where the power of judging what shall be for the general welfare, which goes to every object of human legislation, and where the laws of such judges shall be the supreme law of the land, it seems to be of the last consequence to declare, in most explicit terms, the reservations above alluded to; so much for the propriety of a bill of rights as a necessary bottom to this new system. It is in vain to say, that the defects in this new constitution may be remedied by the legislature created by it. The remedy, as it may, so it may not, be applied: and if it should, a subsequent assembly may repeal the acts of its predecessor; for the parliamentary doctrine is "quod leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant" 4 Inst. 43. Surely this is not a ground upon which a wise and good man would choose to rest the dearest rights of human nature. Indeed, some capital defects are not within the compass of legislative redress. The oligarchic tendency from the combination of president, vice president, and senate, is a ruin not within legislative remedy; nor is the partial right of voting in the senate, or the defective numbers in the house of representatives. It is of little consequence to say that the num-

bers in the last mentioned assembly will increase with the population of these states, because what may happen in twenty-five or twenty-seven years hence is poor alleviation of evils that the intermediate time is big with; for it often happens that abuse, under the name of use, is riveted upon mankind. Nor can a good reason be assigned, for establishing a bad instead of a good government, in the first instance, because time may amend the bad. Men do not choose to be sick because it may happen that physic may cure them. Suppose that good men come first to the administration of this government, and that they should see, or think they see a necessity for trying criminally a man without giving him his jury of the vicinage; or that the freedom of the press should be restrained because it disturbed the operations of the new government; the mutilation of the jury trial, and the restraint of the press would then follow for good purposes as it should seem, and by good men; but these precedents will be followed by bad men, to sacrifice honest and innocent men, and to suppress the exertions of the press for wicked and tyrannic purposes; it being certainly true that "omnia mala exempla ex bonis orta sunt: sed ubi imperium ad ignaros aut minus bonos pervenit, novum illud exemplum ab dignis et idoneis ad indignos et non idoneos fertur." In proof of this, we know that the great and good Lord Holt, to support King William and revolution principles, produced doctrines in a case of libel (King against Bear) subversive both of law and sound reason, which his successor, Lord Mansfield, in the case of Woodfall, would have availed himself of for the restraint of the press and the ruin of liberty. It would appear therefore, that the consideration of human precocity renders it necessary for human safety. that in the first place power not requisite should not be given; and in the next place that necessary powers should be carefully guarded; how far this is done in the new constitution I submit to your wise and attentive consideration; whether for the present it may not be sufficient so to alter the confederation as to allow Congress full liberty to make treaties by removing the restraining causes and giving the impost for a limited time, with power of regulating trade, is a question that deserves to be considered. But I think that the new constitution (properly amended) as it contains many good regulations, might be admitted. And why may not such indispensable amendments be proposed by the conventions, and returned with the new plan to Congress, that a new general convention may so weave them into the proffered system as that a web may be produced fit for freemen to wear? If such amendments were proposed by a capital state or two,

and a willingness expressed to agree with the plan so amended, I cannot see why it may not be effected. It is a mere begging the question to suppose, as some do, that only this moment and this measure will do. But why so, there being no war or violence, external or internal, to prevent due deliberation on this momentous business. The public papers will inform you of what violence has been practised by the agitators of this new system in Philadelphia, to drive on its immediate adoption, as if the subject of government were a business of passion, instead of cool, sober, and intense consideration.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams, in Boston.

NEW-YORK, Oct. 11, 1787.

Dear Sir—I was unwilling to interrupt your attention to more important affairs at Philadelphia, by sending there an acknowledgment of the letter that you were pleased to honour me with from that city, especially as this place afforded nothing worthy of your notice. We have the pleasure to see the first act of Congress, for selling federal lands north-west of Ohio, becoming productive very fast. A large sum of public securities being already paid in upon the first sales, and a new contract, with a company in New-Jersey, for the lands between the two Miamis, that will rid us of at least two millions more of the public debt, is ordered to be made. There is good reason to suppose, that, by the next spring, we shall have reduced the domestic debt near six millions of dollars, and it seems clear that the lands yet to be disposed of, if well managed, will sink the whole thirty millions that are due. The assiduity with which the court of London is courting that of Spain, for the conclusion of a commercial treaty between these powers, renders it a signal misfortune that we have not been able to get a sufficient number of the states together, to produce a conclusion of our treaty with Spain, there being now no doubt, but that if the thirteen were present, ten, at least, would approve the proposed treaty. If Virginia did not stand alone, she would only have North Carolina and Georgia to join her. The state of Europe, with respect to the continuance of peace, still hangs in doubtful balance. The financial weakness of France and Great Britain most strongly opposes war, yet the state of things is such as renders it very questionable, whether even that difficulty,

great as it is, will secure the continuance of peace. It is under the strongest impressions of your goodness and candour, that I venture to make the observations that follow in this letter, assuring you that I feel it among the first distresses that have happened to me in my life, that I find myself compelled, by an irresistible conviction of mind, to doubt about the new system for federal government recommended by the late convention. It is, sir, in consequence of long reflection, upon the nature of man and of government, that I am led to fear the danger that will ensue to civil liberty, from the adoption of the new system in its present form. I am fully sensible of the propriety of change in the present plan of confederation, and although there may be difficulties, not inconsiderable, in procuring an adoption of such amendments to the convention system as will give security to the just rights of human nature, and better secure from injury the discordant interests of the different parts of this Union, yet I hope that those difficulties are not insurmountable, since we, happily, are uninterrupted by external war, or by such internal discords as can prevent fair discussion, in another convention, of those objections that are fundamentally strong against the new constitution, which abounds with useful regulations. There is so great a part of the business already well done, that such alterations, as must (I think) give very general content, could not long employ another convention, when provided with the sense of the different states upon those alterations. I am much inclined to think that the amendments, which are generally called for, will be found to be of such a nature as, though they do not oppose the exercise of a very competent federal power, are yet such as the best theories of government, and the best practice upon those theories have found necessary; at the same time that they are such as the opinions of our people have for ages been founded on. It would be unnecessary for me here to enumerate particulars, as I expect to have the honour of waiting upon you at Mount Vernon, on my way home early in November. In the mean time,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Gen. Washington.

NEW-YORK, Oct. 16th, 1787.

DEAR SIR—I was duly honoured with your favour of September 17th, from Philadelphia, which should have been acknowledged long before now, if the nature of the business it related to had not required time. The establishment of the new plan of government, in its present form, is a question that involves such immense consequences, to the present times and to posterity, that it calls for the deepest attention of the best and wisest friends of their country and mankind. If it be found right, after mature deliberation, adopt it; if wrong, amend it at all events: for to say that a bad government must be established for fear of anarchy, is really saying that we should kill ourselves for fear of dying! Experience, and the actual state of things, show that there is no difficulty in procuring a general convention, the late one having been collected without any obstruction; nor does external war, or internal discord, prevent the most cool, collected, full, and fair discussion of this all-important subject. If, with infinite ease, a convention was obtained to prepare a system, why may not another convention, with equal ease, be obtained to make proper and necessary amendments? Good government is not the work of short time, or of sudden thought. From Moses to Montesquieu the greatest geniuses have been employed on this difficult subject, and yet experience has shown capital defects in the systems produced for the government of mankind. But since it is neither prudent nor easy to make frequent changes in government, and as bad governments have been generally found the most fixed, so it becomes of the last importance to frame the first establishment upon grounds the most unexceptionable, and such as the best theories with experience justify; not trusting, as our new constitution does, and as many approve of doing, to time and future events to correct errors that both reason and experience, in similar cases, now prove to exist in the new system. It has hitherto been supposed a fundamental truth that, in governments rightly balanced, the different branches of legislature should be unconnected, and that the legislative and executive powers should be separate. In the new constitution, the president and senate have all the executive and two-thirds of the legislative; and in some weighty instances (as making all kinds of treaties which are to be the laws of the land) they have the whole legislative and executive powers. They jointly appoint all officers, civil and military, and they (the senate) try all impeachments, either of their own members or of the officers appointed by themselves. Is there not a most formi-

dable combination of power thus created in a few? and can the most critical eye, if a candid one, discover responsibility in this potent corps? or will any sensible man say that great power, without responsibility, can be given to rulers with safety to liberty? It is most clear that the parade of impeachment is nothing to them, or any of them, as little restraint is to be found, I presume, from the fear of offending constituents.

The president is of four years duration, and Virginia (for example) has one vote, out of thirteen, in the choice of him. The senate is a body of six years duration, and as, in the choice of president, the largest state has but a thirteenth part, so is it in the choice of senators; and this thirteenth vote, not of the people, but of electors, two removes from the people. This latter statement is adduced to show that responsibility is as little to be apprehended from amenability to constituents, as from the terror of impeachment. You are, therefore, sir, well warranted in saying that either a monarchy or aristocracy will be generated: perhaps the most grievous system of government may arise! It cannot be denied, with truth, that this new constitution is, in its first principles, most highly and dangerously oligarchic; and it is a point agreed that a government of the few is, of all governments, the worst. The only check to be found in favour of the democratic principle, in this system, is the House of Representatives, which, I believe, may justly be called a mere shred or rag of representation, it being obvious, to the least examination, that smallness of number, and great comparative disparity of power, renders that house of little effect to promote good, or restrain bad government. But what is the power given to this ill-constructed body? To judge of what may be for the *general welfare*, and such judgment, when made that of Congress, is to be *the supreme law of the land.* This seems to be a power co-extensive with every possible object of human legislation. Yet there is no restraint, in form of a bill of rights, to secure (what Dr. Blackstone calls) that residuum of human rights which is not meant to be given up to society, and which, indeed, is not necessary to be given for any good social purpose. The rights of conscience, the freedom of the press, and the trial by jury, are at mercy. It is, indeed, stated that, in criminal cases, the trial shall be by jury; but how? in the state? What then becomes of the jury of the vicinage, or, at least, from the county in the first instance: for the states being from fifty to seven hundred miles in extent, this mode of trial, even in criminal cases, may be greatly impaired; and in civil cases the inference is strong,

that it may be altogether omitted, as the constitution positively assumes it in criminal, and is silent about it in civil causes. Nay, it is more strongly discountenanced in civil cases, by giving the supreme court, in case of appeal, jurisdiction, both as to law and fact. Judge Blackstone, in his learned commentaries, (article Jury Trial,) says, it is the most transcendant privilege which any subject can enjoy, or wish for, that he cannot be affected either in his property, his liberty, or his person, but by the unanimous consent of twelve of his neighbours and equals. A constitution, that I may venture to affirm, has, under providence, secured the just liberties of this nation for a long succession of ages; the impartial administration of justice, which secures both our persons and our properties, is the great end of civil society. But if that be entirely trusted to the magistracy, a select body of men, and those generally selected by the prince, *or such as enjoy the highest offices of the state*, their decisions, in spite of their own natural integrity, will have frequently an involuntary bias towards those of their own rank and dignity. It is not to be expected, from human nature, that the *few* should be always attentive to the good of the many. The learned judge further says, that "every new tribunal, erected for the decision of *facts*, is a step towards establishing aristocracy, the most oppressive of all governments." The answer to these objections is, that the new legislature may provide remedies! But as they may, so they may not, and if they did, a succeeding assembly may repeal the provisions. The evil is found resting upon constitutional bottom, and the remedy upon the mutable ground of legislation, revocable at every annual meeting. It is the more unfortunate that this great security of human rights, the trial by jury, should be weakened in this system, as power is unnecessarily given, in the second section of the third article, to call people from their own country, in all cases of controversy about property between citizens of different states and foreigners, to be tried in a distant court where the Congress may sit: for although inferior congressional courts *may*, for the above purpose, be instituted in the different states, yet this is a matter altogether in the pleasure of the new legislature; so that if they please not to institute them, or if they do not regulate the right of appeal, the people will be exposed to endless oppression, and the necessity of submitting to pay unjust demands rather than follow suitors, through great expense, to far distant tribunals, and to be determined upon there, as it may be, without a jury. In this congressional legislature a bare majority can enact commercial laws, so that the representatives of the seven northern

states, as they will have a majority, can, by law, create the most oppressive monopolies upon the five southern states, whose circumstances and productions are essentially different from theirs, although not a single man of their voters are the representatives of, or amenable to, the people of the southern states. Can such a set of men be, with the least colour of truth, called representatives of those they make laws for? It is supposed that the policy of the northern states will prevent such abuses! but how feeble, sir, is *policy* when opposed to interest among trading people, and what is the restraint arising from policy? It is said that we may be forced, by abuse, to become ship-builders; but how long will it be before a people of agriculture can produce ships sufficient to export such bulky and such extensive commodities as ours; and if we had the ships, from whence are the seamen to come? four thousand of whom, at least, we shall want in Virginia. In questions so liable to abuses, why was not the necessary vote put to two-thirds of the members of the legislature? Upon the whole, sir, my opinion is, that, as this constitution abounds with useful reglations, at the same time that it is liable to strong and fundamental objections, the plan for us to pursue will be to propose the necessary amendments, and express our willingness to adopt it with the amendments; and to suggest the calling a new convention for the purpose of considering them. To this I see no well-founded objection, but great safety and much good to be the probable result. I am perfectly satisfied that you make such use of this letter as you shall think to be for the public good. And now, after begging your pardon for so great a trespass on your patience, and presenting my best respects to your lady, I will conclude with assuring you that

I am, with the sincerest esteem and regard,
dear sir,
Your most affectionate and obedient servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency,
Gov. Randolph.

NEW YORK, October 27th, 1787.

My dear Friend—Our mutual friend, Mr. Gerry, furnishes me with an opportunity of writing to you, without danger of my letter being stopt on its passage, as, I have some reason to apprehend, has been the case with letters written by me, and sent by post. Under this impression, it

is, that I send you, herewith, a copy of my letter to you, of the 5th of this month. Major Sergeant delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me, on the 8th instant, by which, I see that you suppose me to have been a member of the late convention. I did early decline being of that body, because I was a member of Congress, and the plan proposed, was, that Congress should revise, and, if they approved, transmit the proposed *amendments to the confederation*, (for that was the idea, and, indeed, the only idea, that the present federal plan admits of, or that the powers delegated to the convention countenanced,) to the thirteen states, for approbation and ratification. In this state, it appeared to me an inconsistency that the same men should, at New York, revise their own doings at Philadelphia; and this opinion was fully verified, when the members of convention came to Congress, in such numbers, with their own plan; that the votes of three states were convention votes, two others decided by conventions, and conventioners mingled with many other states. It is, sir, most obvious, that the system of the convention could not have a dispassionate and impartial review in Congress; nor, indeed, had it. In my letter to you, above alluded to, I sent you the amendments that I proposed in Congress, and hinted at the reasons that prevented them from appearing on the journal. If they, with my letter, should have miscarried, our friend, Mr. Gerry, can furnish you with them. Mr. Wilson, of Philadelphia, has appeared in print with the convention reasons, in support of their proffered plan; how he has succeeded, Mr. Gerry will inform you. The press has produced such manly and well reasoned refutation of him and his system, that both have lost ground amazingly, in the public estimation. His principal sophism is, that bills of right were necessary in the state constitutions, because every thing, not reserved, was given to the state legislature; but, in the federal government, every thing was reserved that was not given to the federal legislature. This is clearly a distinction without difference, because, independent states are in the same relation to each other, as individuals are with respect to uncreated governments; so that, if reservations were necessary in one case, they are equally necessary in the other; but the futility of this distinction appears from the conduct of the convention itself, for they have made several reservations, every one of which, proves the rule, in conventional idea, to be, that what was not reserved was given. For example, they have reserved from their legislature a power to prevent the importations of negroes, for twenty years, and

also from creating titles; but they have no reservation in favour of the press, rights of conscience, trial by jury in civil cases, or common law securities; as if these were of less importance to the happiness of mankind, than the making of lords, or the importation of slaves! the essential defects in the *construction* of the legislature, and the dangerous blending of the legislative powers with the executive, so as to prevent all responsibility, are such radical objections as render this plan inadmissible, without amendments, in my idea. The Baron Montesquieu says, "that the English is the only nation in the world where political or civil liberty is the direct end of its constitution." I once thought that our free governments were entitled to the same eulogium; but the system under consideration, seems to have reversed the above idea; the acquisition of power unlimited, not the security of civil liberty, appears to be the object. Arbitrary government is, indeed, so carefully entrenched and barricaded against democratic influences, that I am very much mistaken if civil liberty does not expire under its operation. The friends of just liberty here, are astonished at the occlusion of the press in Boston, at a season so momentous to mankind. It is thought to auger ill of the new government proposed, that, on its being first ushered into the world, it should destroy the great palladium of human rights; and at Boston too, where presses first taught America to resist attempts upon her liberty and rights; there to find the great organ of free communication stopped, when that was under consideration, which, of all sublunary things, demands the freest and fullest discussion, government, upon the goodness and badness of which, almost depends whether we shall rank among men or beasts. When you are pleased to write to me, your letter, by being enclosed to our friend, Mr. Osgood, of the treasury, here, will be safely forwarded to me in Virginia, for which place I shall set out from hence on the first of next month. My best respects to your lady, and I pray to be remembered to General Warren, Mr. Lovell, and Doctor Holtern. I am, dear sir, most sincerely and affectionately,

Your friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams, of Boston.

CHANTILLY, February 26, 1788.

DEAR SIR—Captain Merry delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me, on the 11th instant, in which I find you propose the following questions, relative to the new constitution, proposed by the late general convention, and request my answer to them :

First. Whether the United States had not better receive than reject the said constitution?

Secondly. Whether it would not injure our credit in the European world, if we were to dissent therefrom ; and whether our country would not thereby be endangered, as there are large demands in Europe against us ?

Thirdly. Whether every objection to the plan may not, by instructions from the different states, be made as soon as the said Congress may be assembled?

Fourthly. Whether ruin would await us, unless we are consolidated in one general plan of government?

To the first question, namely, "Whether the United States," &c. I answer, that this question implies a *necessity* of either adopting or rejecting. But I know of no power on earth that has, or ever had, a right to propose such a question of extremity to the people, or any part of the people, of the United States. The happiness or misery of mankind depends so essentially upon government, that, when this is to be established by the people for themselves and their posterity, the right of the people cannot be questioned, of so acting with plans proposed, as to adopt them, reject them, or propose amendments to them.

To the second query, "Whether it would not injure," &c. I reply, that this second question is much founded on the first; and, so far as it is, may receive the same answer. It is divisible into two parts; the first, shall our credit be injured in Europe by *dissenting* from the proposed plan? It is presumable, that credit abroad depends much upon union and happiness at home, as it must always greatly do upon that industry and real strength which grows out of the possession of civil liberty. Those, therefore, who contend for the new plan, by propounding such a question, should prove, in the first place, that the adoption of this constitution will secure union and happiness at home, and those valuable consequences that flow from the possession of civil liberty ; and this is the more necessary, as there are such numbers who think that the proffered plan, if admitted without amendments, will empower the administrators of the new government to destroy civil liberty. The second part of this ques-

tion is, whether our country will not be endangered by a *dissent*, as there are large demands against us in Europe." I presume that foreigners have no business with the nature of our government. Payment of their debts they are entitled to, but no possible reason can be assigned, why these debts may not as well be paid if the proposed constitution was to be so amended, as to secure the just rights and liberties of the people from violation, by a proper bill of rights; to retain the trial by jury in all cases, civil as well as criminal, as directed by the common law: to secure the rights of conscience, and freedom of the press. Will France, Holland, or Spain, be disturbed at our retaining these valuable privileges? or, will they quarrel with us for so amending this new plan, as to put it out of the power of the new rulers to carry every citizen of the state, by way of appeal, to be tried for every suit for debt, brought by all others than our own state citizens, in the supreme federal court, where distance and expense may ruin multitudes? Have foreigners any thing to do with our amending the proposed constitution, so as to put it out of the power of the rulers under it, to garble elections, by ordering all the elections of any state to be held at any place they shall choose—at Cape Henry, for instance, if they so please at any time. See section fourth, article first, where they have power over time, place, and manner of holding elections for choosing representatives, without restraint or limitation.

To the third query, "Whether every objection," &c. I answer, that the constitution containing these objections, is made by the people of the United States; "and the removal of them by the Congress, would only be a common act of legislation, which may be revoked and repealed by every subsequent meeting of the Congress. So that the power of oppressing will be founded on the strong and lasting ground of a constitution made by the people of the United States, and the remedies (if the new rulers should ever please to declare any,) will rest on feeble and changeable acts of a common legislature. Can it be safe or prudent to suffer this? As for instructions, it is to be remarked, that the senators are chosen by the legislature of the states, and the representatives by all the freeholders—to instruct one, and not both branches of the new legislature, would be doing nothing; and to render instructions of use, the general assembly, and the freeholders of the community, must unite. The almost impossibility of procuring such a union from the majority of the United States, is too obvious, not to show the very little dependence that should be put on such instructions. And, after all, the

result could only be a legislative and mutable act against a fixed constitution. But how absurd would it be for the people to agree to a constitutional evil to-day, and to-morrow call for a legislative redress of that evil!

The fourth and last question, "Whether ruin would await us," &c. I am clearly of opinion, that our greater strength, safety, and happiness, depends on our union; but I am as clear that this union had infinitely better be on principles that give security to the just rights and liberties of mankind, than on such principles as permit rulers to destroy them. Thus, sir, I hope that I have fully, and to your satisfaction, answered your several questions: so that you may think yourself warranted, if not bound to be a friend to amendments that should be constitutional. To trust to future events for remedy of evils that we have ourselves once created, is like choosing to be sick, because a doctor may possibly cure us! A very capital defect in this new project is, that the executive and legislative powers are so blended and united, as to remove all chance for responsibility; and to possess man with very great powers, without making him easily answerable for an abuse of these powers, is, in my opinion, neither safe nor wise. I am glad to hear that Colonel Barbour stands for the convention. It is many years ago since I saw his conduct in the legislature, and observed it to be both sensible and honest. I have been obliged to write in haste, so that you may be sure this letter is not intended for the press.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

JAMES GORDEN, jun. Esq.

CHANTILLY, in Virginia, April 28th, 1788.

MY DEAR SIR—Your favour of December 3d, in the last year, reached me the last of January following, and it should have been answered with my thanks long since, if the uncommon badness of the winter, stopping all communication, had not prevented. Your sentiments on the new political structure, are, in my mind, strong and just. Both reason and experience prove, that so extensive a territory as that of the United States, including such a variety of climates, productions, interests; and so great difference of manners, habits, and customs; cannot be governed in freedom—until formed into states, sovereign, *sub modo*, and confederated for the common good. In the latter case, opinion founded on the

knowledge of those who govern, procures obedience without force. But remove the opinion, which must fall with a knowledge of characters in so widely extended a country, and force then becomes necessary to secure the purposes of civil government: hence the military array at Kamtschatka, at Petersburg, and through every part of the widely extended Russian empire. Thus force, the parent and the support of tyranny, is demanded for good purposes, although for ever abused to bad ones—that a consolidated, and not a federal government, was the design of *some*, who formed this new project, I have no doubt about. The dazzling ideas of glory, wealth, and power uncontrolled, unfettered by popular opinions, are powerful to captivate the ambitious and the avaricious. With such people, obedience resulting from fear, the offspring of force, is preferable to obedience flowing from esteem and confidence, the legitimate offspring of the knowledge that men have of wisdom and virtue in their governors: and, above all, from the conviction that abuses may be rectified by the substantial checks that political freedom furnish. Massachusetts, I see, has adopted the plan; but proposes to insist perseveringly on amendments. If it were permitted an individual to question so enlightened an assembly, I would ask, why submit to a system requiring such amendments, and trust to creatures of our own creation, for the correcting of evils in it that threaten the destruction of those ends for which the system was formed? The fear of greater evils has been stated: but I cannot help considering such fears as being generated by design upon weakness. The objections to the present system, if accurately considered, will, I believe, be found to grow out of those temporary pressures, created by a long and expensive war, which time and prudence may remove. But, though it were admitted that some amendments to the present confederation would better promote the ends designed by it, why, for that reason, exterminate the present plan, and establish on its ruins another, so replete with power, danger, and hydra-headed mischief? The Massachusetts amendments are good, so far as they go. The first, third, and fourth amendments are well contrived to keep in existence the state sovereignties; and the first particularly proper for securing liberty from the abuse of construction, which the new plan most amply admits of. But why, my dear friend, was the provision in your seventh proposition of amendment, confined to causes between citizens of different states, since the reason applies to suitors of every country, and foreigners will be more apt than our own citizens to abuse, in the way, which, that part of the proffered

plan permits, and which this amendment of Massachusetts is designed to prevent? England and Scotland are united for every good purpose of defence and offence, yet a foreigner cannot sue a resident Scotsman in England for debt contracted in Scotland: nor will any foreign nation upon earth grant a similar privilege to our citizens over theirs, of calling their people from their own countries to answer demands against them—the fixt idea of all the European nations being, that strangers are not to have privileges in their own country superior to what their own subjects enjoy.*

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

CHANTILLY, May 7th, 1788.

Dear Sir—Your son delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me on the 30th instant, and I have promoted his views, as far as it is in my power at present, by directing the tobacco I had intended to sell in the country, to be put on board his vessel. I am inclined to think, for the reasons assigned by him, that the French market will be as good a one, at least, as any that we can send to. Give me leave now, dear sir, to make a few observations on the important business that will call you to Richmond next month. It seems pretty clear at present, that four other states, viz. North Carolina, New-York, Rhode Island, and New-Hampshire, will depend much upon Virginia for their determination on the convention project of a new constitution; therefore it becomes us to be very circumspect and careful about the conduct we pursue, as, on the one hand, every possible exertion of wisdom and firmness should be employed to prevent danger to civil liberty, so, on the other hand, the most watchful precaution should take place to prevent the foes of union, order, and good government, from succeeding so far as to prevent our acceptance of the good part of the plan proposed. I submit to you, sir, whether, to form a consistent union of conduct, it would not be well for six or eight leading friends to amendments to meet privately, and, having formed the best possible judgment of the members' sentiments from knowledge of the men, to see how far it may be safe to press either for modes of amendment or the extent of amendments, and to govern accordingly. But, certainly, the firmest stand should be made against the very arbitrary

* The person to whom the foregoing letter is addressed, is not mentioned.

mode that has been pursued in some states, that is, to propose a question of absolute rejection or implicit admission. For though it is true that the convention plan looks something like this, yet I think every temperate man must agree that neither the convention, nor any set of men upon earth, have or had a right to insist upon such a question of extremity. To receive the good and reject the bad is too necessary and inherent a right to be parted with. As some subtle managers will be upon the convention, I believe you will find entrapping questions proposed at first as a ground-work of proceeding, which will hamper, confine, and narrow all attempts to proper investigation or necessary amendment, and this will be done under the plausible pretext of losing all by attempting *any* change. I judge that it will be so here, because I observe a similar conduct has been pursued in other places, as in Maryland and Pennsylvania. I trust that such uncandid and dangerous stratagems will be opposed and prevented in the convention of Virginia, and a thorough, particular, and careful examination be first made into all its parts as a previous requisite to the formation of any question upon it. During this process a tolerable judgment may be formed of the sentiments of the generality, and a clue furnished for forming successful propositions for amendment, as the candid friends to this system admit that amendments may be made to improve the plan, but say that these amendments ought to be made, and may be obtained from the new Congress without endangering a total loss of the proposed constitution. I say that those who talk thus, if they are sincere, will not object to this plan, which, as I propose it, something like the proceeding of the convention parliament in 1688, in the form of ratification, insert plainly and strongly such amendments as can be agreed upon, and say, that the people of Virginia do claim, demand, and insist upon these as their undoubted rights and liberties which they mean not to part with; and if these are not obtained and secured by the mode pointed out in the fifth article of the convention plan, in two years after the meeting of the new Congress, that Virginia shall, in that case, be considered as disengaged from this ratification. Under this proposition a development will be made of the sincerity of those who advocate the new plan, the beneficial parts of it retained, and a just security given to civil liberty. In the fifth article it is stated that two-thirds of Congress may propose amendments, which, being approved by three-fourths of the legislatures, become parts of the constitution. By this mode, the new Congress may obtain our amendments without risking the convulsion of conventions, and the friends

of the plan will be gratified in what they say is necessary; the putting the government in motion, when, as they again say, amendments may and ought to be obtained. By this mode, too, in all probability, the undetermined states may be brought to harmonize, and the formidable minorities, in the assenting states, may be quieted. By this friendly and reasonable accommodation, the perpetual distrust and opposition, that will inevitably follow the total adoption of the plan, from the state legislatures, may be happily prevented, and friendly united exertions take place. Much reflection has convinced me that this mode is the best that I have had an opportunity of contemplating. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of recommending it to your serious and patriotic attention; in the formation of these amendments, *localities* ought to be avoided as much as possible. The danger of monopolized trade may be prevented by calling for the consent of three-fourths of the United States on regulations of trade. The trial by jury, in this state, to be insisted on, as it used under our present government, and confining the supreme federal court to the jurisdiction of *law* excluding *fact*. The Massachusetts amendments, except the second, and extending the seventh to foreigners as well as citizens of other states, appear to me to be very good, and for their adoption the aid of that powerful state may be secured. The freedom of the press is, by no means, sufficiently attended to by Massachusetts, nor have they remedied the want of responsibility by the impolitic combination of president and senate. It does appear to me, that, in the present temper of America, if the Massachusetts amendments, with those suggested by me, being added, and inserted in our ratification as before stated, we may easily agree, and I verily believe that the most essential good consequences would be the result.

Affectionately yours,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

GEORGE MASON, Esq. Gunston Hall.

CHANTILLY, May 22, 1788.

DEAR SIR—The manner in which we have together struggled for the just rights of human nature, with the friendly correspondence that we have maintained, entitles us, I hope, to the most unreserved confidence in each other, upon the subject of human rights, and the liberty of our country. It is probable that yourself no more than I do, propose to be hereafter politically engaged; neither therefore expecting to gain,

or fearing to loose, the candid part of mankind, will admit us to be impartial judges, at least of the arduous business that calls you to Richmond, on the second of next month. I do not recollect to have met with a sensible and candid man who has not admitted, that it would be both safer and better if amendments were made to the new constitution, proposed for the government of the United States; but the friends to the idea of amendments divide about the mode of obtaining them, some thinking that a second convention might do the business, whilst others fear that the attempt to remedy by another convention, would risk the whole. I have been informed that you wished amendments, but disliked the plan of another convention; the just weight that you have in the councils of your country, may put it in your power, sir, to save from arbitrary rule a great and free people; I have used the words *arbitrary rule*, because great numbers fear that this will be the case, as it *may* be so under the new proposed system, when they reflect on the unvarying progress of power in the hands of frail man; to accomplish the ends of society by being equal to contingencies infinite, demands the deposit of power great and extensive indeed, in the hands of rulers, so great as to render abuse probable, unless prevented by the most careful precautions; among which, the freedom and frequency of elections, the liberty of the press, and the trial by jury, with the independency of the judges, seem to be so capital and essential, that they ought to be secured by a bill of rights, to regulate the discretion of rulers in a legal way, restraining the progress of ambition and avarice within just bounds. Rulers must act by subordinate agents generally, and however the former may be secure from the pursuits of justice, the latter are forever kept in check by the trial by jury, where that exists in all its rights. This most excellent security against oppression, is a universal, powerful, and equal protection of all. But the benefit to be derived from this system, is most effectually to be obtained from a well informed and enlightened people; here arises the necessity for the freedom of the press, which is the happiest organ of communication ever yet devised, the quickest and surest means, of conveying intelligence to the human mind. I am grieved to be forced to think, after the most mature consideration of the constitution proposed, that it leaves the three essential securities above stated, under the mere pleasure of the new rulers; and why should it do so, sir, since the violation of these cannot be necessary to *good*, but will be always extremely convenient for *bad* government. It is a question deserving intense consideration, whether the

state sovereignties ought not to be supported, perhaps in the way proposed by Massachusetts in their first, third, and fourth, amendments. Force and opinion seem to be the two ways alone, by which men can be governed, the latter appears the most proper, for a free people, but remove that, and obedience, I apprehend, can only be found to result from fear, the offspring of force; if this be so, can opinion exist, without competent knowledge of those who govern, and can that knowledge take place, in a country so extensive as the territory of the United States, which is stated by captain Hutchins at a million of square miles; whilst the empire of Germany, contains but 192,000, and that of France, but 163,000 square miles, the almost infinite variety of climates, soils, productions, manners, customs, and interests, renders this still more difficult, for the universal government of our legislature; but very practicable to confederated states, united for mutual safety and happiness, each contributing to the federal head, such a part of its sovereignty, as would render the government fully adequate to these purposes, and no more. The people would govern themselves more easily, the laws of each state, being adapted to its own genius and circumstances; the liberties of the United States would probably be more secure, than under the proposed plan, which, carefully attended to, will be found capable of annihilating the state sovereignties, by the power given to push the operations of their government, under the general legislative right, of commanding taxes without restraint, and seizing the productive revenues that the states may happily fall upon, for their support, and this right, powerfully supported by the congressional court of justice, and by the sacred tye of oath upon all the state judges, will probably prove so strong as to render resistance vain, and the state governments as feeble and contemptible as was the senatorial authority, under the Roman emperors; the name existed, but the thing was gone. I have observed, sir, that the sensible and candid friends of the proposed plan agree that amendments would be proper, but fear the consequences of another convention. I submit the following as an effectual compromise, between the majorities and formidable minorities, that generally prevail. It seems probable, that the determinations of four states, will be materially influenced by the determination of Virginia, which places a strong obligation on this country, to be unusually cautious and circumspect in her conventional conduct; the mode proposed is something like that pursued by the convention parliament of England in 1688. In the act of ratification, insert plainly and strongly, such amendments as can be agreed

upon, and say, that the people of Virginia do insist upon, and mean to retain them as their undoubted rights and liberties, which they intended not to part with, and if these are not obtained and secured by the mode pointed out by the fifth artice of the convention plan, in two years after the meeting of the new congress, that Virginia shall be considered as disengaged from this ratification; in the fifth article it is stated, that two thirds of Congress may propose amendments, which being approved by three fourths of the legislatures, become parts of the constitution; so that the new Congress may obtain the amendment of Virginia, without risking the convulsion of a convention. Thus the beneficial parts of the new system may be retained, and a just security be given for civil liberty, whilst the friends of the system will be gratified, in what they say is necessary, to wit, the putting the government in motion, when, as they again say, amendments may, and ought to be made. The good consequences resulting from this method, will probably be, that the undetermined states may be brought to harmonize, and the formidable minorities in many assenting states, be quieted by so friendly and reasonable an accommodation; and thus the perpetual opposition that will inevitably follow, (the total adoption of the plan) from the state legislatures, may be happily prevented, and united exertions take place. In the formation of these amendments, localities ought to be avoided as much as possible. The danger of monopolized trade may be removed, by calling for the consent of three fourths of the United States, on regulations of commerce. The trial by Jury to be according to the course of proceeding in the state, where the cause criminal or civil is tried, and confining the supreme federal court to the jurisdiction of law, excluding fact. To prevent surprises, and the fixing of injurious laws, it would seem to be prudent to declare against the making laws perpetual, until the experience of two years at least, had vouched their utility; it being much more easy to get a good law continued, than a bad one repealed. The amendments of Massachusetts, appear to be good so far as they go, except the second, and extending the seventh to foreigners, as well as the citizens of other states in this union; and for their adoption, the aid of that powerful state may be secured. The freedom of the press, is by no means sufficiently attended to by Massachusetts, nor have they remedied the want of responsibility, by the impolitic combination of president and senate. It does appear to me, that in the present temper of America, if the Massachusetts amendments with those herein suggested being added, and inserted

in the form of our ratification as before stated, that Virginia may safely agree, and I believe that the most salutary consequences would ensue. I pray, sir, that God may bless the convention with wisdom, maturity of counsel, and constant care of the public liberty, and that he may have you in his holy keeping. With very great esteem and regard I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Mr. Chancellor Pendleton.

CHANTILLY, October 15th, 1788.

Sir—My sentiments of the new constitution, in its present form, having been already communicated to the public, it is not necessary here to repeat my objections; nor will it be wondered, that, with such sentiments, I should declare my willingness to serve in the senate of the new Congress, where, in my judgment, the best opportunity will be afforded of doing the most essential services to the community, and especially at its first institution, when amendments so necessary for the security of civil liberty, will probably be the most attainable. I do assure you, sir, that nothing but the reverence I have for the liberties of my country, and a thorough conviction of the danger these will be exposed to by the unamended state of the new constitution, could have induced me to consent again to become a public man; but where the peace, happiness, and freedom of my country seems concerned, all private considerations will, I hope, with me, forever give place. It is impossible that amendments can fail to be recommended by the new Congress, if the legislatures shall send to that body such men as are known friends to civil liberty, and to the amendments that have been proposed by many respectable states, and are desired by such numbers of respectable citizens; but, to be sure, if characters shall be appointed to the new government, who are so zealously attached to it as to be incapable of seeing faults in it, the friends of just government may be disappointed in their views of amendments, however ardently, and generally, it may be desired. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. John Jones, in Richmond.

CHANTILLY, October 15th, 1788.

DEAR SIR—Long acquaintance and friendship, with very similar political opinions, will apologize for my troubling you with my wishes that amendments may be procured to the new constitution, by means of the new Congress; and that I am willing to exert my faculties for the obtaining such amendments in the senate of the new legislature, if it shall please the Assembly to send me there; and this information to my friends is the more necessary, because I know it is a common art, in these times, to prevent elections by asserting that persons proposed will not serve, if elected. That amendments are necessary to this system, cannot, I think, be doubted by any sensible and dispassionate man. The thing itself, the judgment of many respectable states, and great numbers of individuals, all proclaim it. Nor will amendments, probably, fail to be made, unless the legislatures should choose men so zealously and blindly devoted as to prevent them from seeing defects that all other men do see. As the subject has been very fully considered, and a majority have received it, professedly under the idea of expected amendments, I should think that, as good citizens, it now becomes us to exert our faculties so to conduct the business as that a wise, energetic, and free government, may result from properly amending the present form. Should this fortunately be your opinion, the community will have the aid of your knowledge and experience in the new legislature.

I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THEODORICK BLAND, Esquire.

NEW YORK, May 28th, 1789.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of March the 23d, was yesterday delivered to me, about eight weeks from its date. The public good, and your recommendation, are motives so powerful with me, that General Martin will be sure of my friendship whenever the time shall come that I can serve him. How the business of appointment to the office he wishes, or any other, will go on, it is not easy to say, because nothing of that kind has yet come upon the tapis. If the constitutional *nomination* takes place, I am inclined to think, that the approbation of the Senate will not be withheld, unless some

palpable impropriety should mark the nomination, which is hardly to be supposed. If, however, it should so turn out as to be in my power to serve General Martin, I shall assuredly do it. I have seen very few of the scurrilous papers that you allude to, but from those I have seen, it is my opinion that neither you nor I may be much disturbed at their effects, since it is not possible that they can have influence with any whose good opinion is worth having. Of all the anonymous nonsense and adulation that I have met with, Decius is the most contemptible; his effusions, nevertheless, are pretty similar to the genius and spirit that has animated the rest of his party. Nothing more than report of the Spanish proceedings have reached me; the public consideration here has never been yet turned upon any thing of that kind. The state of Georgia did, last July, make an offer to the then Congress, of ceding part of her western territory to the United States; but the terms of cession were then clogged with so many oppressive conditions, that the cession was not accepted. I do not know that the state has since receded from the terms it then proposed; whenever any thing relative to that business, shall come on the carpet, I will inform you. An act has passed the Congress for administering the constitutional oath, and an impost bill is now before the Senate, from the House of Representatives; the duties are thought too high, and we are proposing a reduction. A long regulating bill, for securing the collection, is now in the House of Representatives; and in the Senate, a plan is forming for establishing the judiciary system. So far as this has gone, I am satisfied to see a spirit prevailing that promises to send this system out free from those vexations and abuses that might have been warranted by the terms of the constitution. It must never be forgotten, however, that the liberties of the people are not so safe under the *gracious manner* of government, as by the limitation of *power*. Mr. Madison has given notice, that, on Monday se'nnight, he will call for the attention of the house to the subject of amendments. I apprehend, that his ideas, and those of our convention, on this subject, are not similar. We shall carefully attend to this; and when the plan comes to the senate, we shall prepare to abridge, or enlarge, so as to effect, if possible, the wishes of our legislature. I think, from what I hear and see, that many of our amendments will not succeed, but my hopes are strong, that such as may effectually secure civil liberty will not be refused. As two thirds of the legislatures have refused to apply for a general convention, the Congress, it seems, can constitutionally, only submit their propositions

of amendments to the legislatures, or to state conventions; but, I suppose, neitheir of these modes will fail, where the design is more effectually to secure civil liberty; the wish to do which, was, I assure you, the sole reason that could have influenced me to come here, for I agree perfectly with you, that your time of life and mine, after the turbulence we have passed through, renders repose necessary to our declining years. From what you write of the lands on the western frontier of Georgia, I suppose that you have views of family settlement there; as, in that case, the Spaniards will be neighbours, I submit to your consideration, to reflect on the national character of that people, which seems to be firm and immovable in friendship, but very inverate in enmity; peaceable and honest in their dealings, but zealous to an extreme, of attempts upon their territory, especially that from whence they derive their wealth. Will it not be prudent, for such as are their neighbours, to cultivate their friendship, rather than provoke their enmity? It appears to me, that a judicious procedure of this kind, may get every thing from their good will, whilst it will not be pleasant to be in enmity with them; more especially, as there is little doubt, but that, in case of quarrel with us, France will, upon principles of the Bourbon alliance, inevitably join them. The English court have, for some time past, been assiduously courting the court of Spain to a commercial treaty, and, I fear, that our conduct has favoured their views; such a treaty would hurt us, in the same proportion that it will benefit our former enemies. The eyes of Europe are now turned, upon the meeting of the states general in France. If that people succeed in restoring their ancient liberty, France will be the most potent empire in Europe. The war in the north of that part of the world, seems likely to continue, unless the peculiar state of England and of France, should be the means of restoring peace. My brother Arthur, desires his compliments to you: he has read your debates in convention, and accords with you in opinion, about the probable issue of the present system.

I am, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, your affectionate friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Patrick Henry, Esquire.

NEW YORK, September 14, 1789.

DEAR SIR—I have written two letters to you since my receipt of yours dated March 23d, both which I enclosed to our friend Mr. George Fleming, at Richmond, and he has informed me of their safe arrival, and that he had forwarded them to you. I have since waited to see the issue of the proposed amendments to the constitution, that I might give you the most exact accounts of that business, as they came from the House of Representatives; they were far short of the wishes of our convention, but as they are returned by the Senate they are certainly much weakened. You may be assured that nothing on my part was left undone to prevent this, and every possible effort was used to give success to all the amendments proposed by our country. We might as well have attempted to move mount Atlas upon our shoulders. In fact, the idea of subsequent amendments, was little better than putting oneself to death first, in expectation that the doctor, who wished our destruction, would afterwards restore us to life. I am grieved to see too many look at the rights of the people, as a miser examines a security to find a flaw in it. The great points of free election, jury trial in criminal cases, and the unlimited right of taxation, and standing armies remain as they were. The most essential danger from the present system arises, in my opinion, from its tendency to a consolidated government, instead of a union of confederated states. The history of the world and reason concur in proving, that so extensive a territory as the United States comprehend, never was, or can be governed in freedom under the former idea; under the latter it is abundantly more practicable, because extended representation, knowledge of characters, and confidence in consequence, secures that good opinion of rulers, without which, fear, the offspring of force, can alone answer, for all free government resting on opinion, if that fails, force must succeed; hence standing armies and despotism follow. I take this reasoning to be unrefutable, and therefore it becomes the friends of liberty to guard with perfect vigilance every right that belongs to the states, and to protest against every invasion of them, taking care always to procure as many protesting states as possible: this kind of vigilance will create caution and establish such a mode of conduct as will create a system of precedent that will prevent a consolidating effect from taking place by slow but sure degrees. A sufficient number of legislatures cannot be got at present to agree in demanding a convention, but I shall be very much mistaken indeed, if, ere long, a great sufficiency will not

concur in this measure. The preamble to the amendments is really curious. A careless reader would be apt to suppose that the amendments desired by the states had been graciously granted, but when the thing done is compared with that desired, nothing can be more unlike. Some valuable rights are indeed declared, but the power to violate them to all intents and purposes remains unchanged. The southern Indians having repeatedly declared the little confidence they had in the justice of the bordering states, it was thought that sending commissioners from hence to treat with them, who were totally unconnected with the parties and their disputes, would be the most likely way to gain the Indian confidence, and thereby obtain a secure and lasting peace. Upon this idea three gentlemen have been sent from hence to treat with the Creeks, where probably some measure may be taken with the Cherokees also. In this mode of doing business there was no opportunity for suggesting General Martin; and those gentlemen who have gone, are only appointed *pro hac vice*, and return here when they have done the business. It is probable that this treaty will end in a large cession of territory to Georgia, which may cause a cession of some part to the United States; in either case, those who choose may have an opportunity of obtaining grants in that country, said to be a very fine one. As the laws that have passed Congress this session will all be sent to Richmond, where I am happy to hear you will be in the Assembly, it is unnecessary for me to say any thing of them in this letter, already I fear too long. It is now proposed to adjourn on the 22d inst. but I think it will be the first of October, before this result takes place. I am sure that nothing I write politically to you, will be improperly communicated.

I am, with the most cordial esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

P. Henry, Esq. Virginia.

NEW YORK, Sept. 28, 1789.

Sir—We have now the honour of enclosing the proposition of amendments to the constitution of the United States, that has been finally agreed upon by Congress. We can assure you sir, that nothing on our part has been omitted to procure the adoption of those radical amendments proposed by the convention, and approved by the legislatures of our country, which as our constituent we shall always consider it our

duty with respect and reverence to obey. The journal of the Senate herewith transmitted, will at once show how exact and how unfortunate we have been in this business. It is impossible for us not to see the necessary tendency to consolidate empire in the natural operation of the constitution if no further amended than as we proposed; and it is equally impossible for us not to be apprehensive for civil liberty, when we know of no instance in the records of history, that shows a people ruled in freedom, when subject to one undivided government, and inhabiting territory so extensive as that of the United States, and when, as it seems to us, the nature of man and of things prevent it. The impracticability in such case, of carrying representation sufficiently near to the people for procuring their confidence and consequent obedience, compels a resort to fear resulting from great force, and excessive power in government. Confederated republics, where the federal hand is not possessed of absorbing power, may admit the existence of freedom, whilst it preserves union, strength, and safety. Such amendments therefore, as may secure against the annihilation of the state governments, we devoutly wish to see adopted. If a persevering application to Congress, from the states that have desired such amendments should fail of its objects, we are disposed to think, reasoning from causes to effects, that unless a dangerous apathy should invade the public mind, it will not be many years before the constitutional number of legislatures will be found to demand a convention for the purpose. We have sent a complete set of the journals of each house of Congress, and through the appointed channel will be transmitted the acts that have passed this session. In these will be seen the nature and extent of the judiciary, the estimated expense of the government, and the means, so far adopted, for defraying the latter. We beg sir, to be presented, with all duty, to the honourable house of representatives, and to assure you, that we are, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servants,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.
WILLIAM GRAYSON.

Honourable Speaker of the House
of Delegates, Virginia.

NEW YORK, June 10th, 1790.

DEAR SIR—My ill state of health, the inclemency of the season appointed for the meeting of Congress, which in this

place, is most severely felt by all, and absolutely destructive to valetudinary people, prevented me from reaching Congress, before the 20th of April. Previous to my coming, the cession of North Carolina, had been received, and legalized by both houses; and a temporary government, there, similar to that west of Ohio, established. This system included the appointment of a governor, of that district, who by the same system, is also Indian agent, and authorized to transact all affairs with the Indians, in a more extensive and absolute manner, than such agents have been heretofore authorized to do. This then being an office of great consideration and importance, you may easily see, that it would be earnestly sought after, and attainable only by great interest, and particularly such, as was supported by persons in office, here from that state, which had made the cession, as well as by those from Georgia, who were hostile to General M——n. On my arrival here, and finding your two letters, that had been here some time before, I immediately caused Governor Martins to be P——d; the event has been, as apprehended, that your friend would fail, for Mr. William Blunt, of North Carolina, (heretofore in Congress, from that state,) has been appointed governor of the ceded territory, and, as I have observed above, that appointment includes the Indian agency, thus this business has terminated. I should have given you this information sooner, but quickly after my arrival here, I was, with many others, taken extremely ill, so that my life was long in danger, and I was confined for near a month; the effects of this malady, are still upon me, and my weakness so considerable, as to render writing painful to me. With my letters, I found one from you, to Colonel Grayson, which I secured, and now return to you, presuming, that you designed it only for the inspection of the friend, to whom it was addressed. It is impossible, for me to describe the scene here, and shall content myself with saying, that every thing met with in my former life, is mere trifling, compared with this, and you know, that I have been in very stormy legislative scenes. The active and persevering efforts of those who have engrossed the public securities, for little or nothing, not content with that advantage, must have six per cent. forever, on the full nominal value of their possessions; so that a vast monied interest is to be created, that will forever be warring against the landed interest, to the destruction of the latter; and this evil, great as it would be, by funding the debts of the United States only, is to be increased ten fold, by the assumption of the state debts. By this plan, the monied and the political speculator, will both be gratified; the

former, by the way I have already stated, and the latter, by possessing the general government, with the sole cause, and consequently, with the whole power of taxation, and so converting the state legislatures into mere corporations. That this will be the consequence of funding the continental and state debts, amounting to about eighty millions of specie dollars, there can be no difficulty in foreseeing. There appears to be no prospect of further amendments to the constitution, this session, and I own, 'tis my wish, that the amendments generally, as proposed at the last session, had been adopted by our legislature; for although there is much force in your observations, upon that subject, yet when I consider one great object of declarations, beyond which government may not go, to wit: that they inculcate upon the minds of the people, just ideas of their rights, it will always be hazardous for rulers, however possessed of means, to undertake a violation of what is generally known to be right, and to be encroachments on the rights of the community: besides, that by getting as much as we can at different times, we may at last come to obtain the greatest part of our wishes. It would probably contribute much to this end, if at the ensuing election of representatives, instructions were given by the people of those districts, that send influential members here, to exert themselves to procure such additional amendments as have not yet been made. Such bad use has so often been made of my letters, that I am sure, the bare hint of this, is sufficient to secure your remembrance, that when I write to you, 'tis always in confidence. I shall be at all times happy to hear from you, being very sincerely, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and ob't serv't.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

PATRICK HENRY, Esq., Virginia.

HEAD QUARTERS, the 28th October, 1777.

Dear Sir—Receive my very sincere thanks for the advice you favoured me with. I am yet more sensible of such a service, when I consider my friends must be in the same want of news, as I am myself, without being happier perhaps in their expectations; however, I'll write by every good opportunity—some letters will escape, and let them know that I am alive. I am not in any doubt, that the English will kill me in Europe, when they expect to take me in America, according to their New York papers. I take therefore the liberty, of enclosing you a letter for a friend of mine, where I give to him some accounts in general; none of my acquaintances shall receive a word from me, without political and American reflections. I know well the . . . . . genius of our enemies, that I'll endeavour all my powers, to let the truth . . . . . in Europe, of their ridiculous relations. For a long time, nobody would think himself a true friend of mine, without being what they call, a *good insurgent*. I dare hope, that I can raise in my own country, as strong a party as can be there, of the most agreeable and polite. Though I wrote several letters upon the same principles, I send you but one; the others will be carried by Mr. de Valfont, actually at, or very near York, whom I will introduce to my friends in France. I beg from you . . . . the occasion of this gentleman the greatest pleasure and most interesting service; he is my intimate friend, and I wish warmly to obtain the following favour.—He came over on board of my vessel by a sincere attachment for me, and with the hope of being always in my family; if he could stay, I would now trouble Congress, in order to get employment for him, but the deplorable state of his health obliges him to return home. He has not a moment to lose—his life depends on his safe and speedy arrival in France. I understand that Congress would engage the captain of their packet, to take him on board, alone, or if possible, with one of his friends; it is much better, than exposing him to the dangers of a merchant vessel. Will you be so good, sir, to inquire yourself, where my friend can be; Mr. Lawrens, who will receive a letter from his son, is able, I believe, to give you that intelligence; then you'll engage Mr. de Valfont, to take that opportunity, and the captain, to embark him in his vessel, at whatever price he will choose. Perhaps 'tis not . . . . . to

our business, that my letters could arrive soon. I know by my experience, that a great authenticity is desired in the American views; however, I give you one, which in all cases, will acquaint my societies in Paris, of John Burgoyne being prisoner of war. Farewell, sir, I will not detain your despatches, therefore it shall not give me the pleasure of presenting you in long terms, with the assurances of my affection and esteem, with which I am, yours,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

I add here, sir, the letters of several gentlemen, and one from myself to the French ambassador, which you can read, and seal after if you please. A meeting of general officers yesterday, prevented me of sending my despatches. I enclose too, a letter from his excellency, General Washington, for you. Sir, be pleased to let Mr. Carrol get the other one.

VALLEY FORGE CAMP, the 29th of May, 1778.

Dear Sir—Agreeable to your kind proposition, of sending with packets of Congress, those I should give to you, I have the honour to send a large parcel of letters, which I beg you would forward. The president of Congress, has, I believe, some letters from me, to my friends in France, which you will be pleased to ask from him, and I don't know but that Mr. de Francy might have some; the whole is to go (if you please) in your packet. I hope the bearer of this, will arrive in time, but if he be too late, I will take it as a favour of you, to send an express to the place where your vessel lies, *not at public*, but at my expense. I understand there are vessels going with despatches of Congress, every tenth day, to France; if so, I would be extremely obliged to you to let me know immediately, when my packets are to be sent, because I would make new ones, without loss of time. The only way to be certain, that my friends will hear from me, is to divide my letters by several occasions. Since the last miscarriage and little walk around the country of Sir Henry Clinton, we have no interesting news. It is with the greatest gratefulness, that I have heard, in the full persuasion of possessing me and the whole detachment, they had already very kindly disposed of me, and intended to send me immediately to their gracious sovereign;—is it not very impolite to acknowledge such a favour, by procuring them a fatiguing and useless route of more than forty miles. I

will not detain longer the officer, bearer of these despatches; and I will end this letter, with the assurances of a sentiment of mine, which is, I do assure you, very sincere, it is the regard and affection, with which I have the honour to be, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Yorktown.

VALLEY FORGE CAMP, 8th of June, 1778.

Dear Sir—I will trouble you with these few lines, in behalf of a gentleman, who is now in Yorktown, and wants to get a certificate of his services from Congress; this is General Conway, who has written to me several letters on the subject. My being the warmest friend and the first admirer of our great general, will not prevent me to speak in favour of a gentleman, whose conduct I was very far from approving on that and on other respects; but General Conway, is an officer in the French service, and a good one; he is much known by a man for whom I have a great regard, and it engages me to make you this request, though I just now received a letter of his, of which I could be very little satisfied; therefore, when his affair be spoken of in Congress, be so good as to mention, that I will be very glad if a certificate is given to him, of what they believe he deserves by his services. I beg you would show this letter to the president of Congress, and believe me, with the most sincere regard, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee.

CAMP AT BRUNSWICK, 2d July 1778.

Dear Sir—I beg leave to tell you some words of congratulation, for the advantage obtained by General Washington and your troops, over the forces of the English army. I think their journey through the Jerseys has been rather disagreeable, and bought very dear. This occasion, I fancy will be a reason for sending some packet boat to France; I beg you would give me notice of it, in time, that my friends may not be deceived by some . . . . . account, as they were at Brandywine. Don't you find, my dear sir, very extraordinary, to be in such an ignorance, of what is

doing in camp? may I hope you will be so good, as to let me know which were the last accounts—which was the last date arrived to your knowledge. I will take the liberty of recommending once more to your friendship, the affair of Colonel Armaud, which I wish to be soon settled, agreeable to his desire. There is one other thing I want to consult you upon: you have seen my public letter concerning the M. de Rienne, and therefore you are acquainted well enough of what concerns that gentleman. He has always been near the enemy, and risked to be taken without commission; the consequences thereof could be avoided, was Congress kind enough to make him a compliment of the commission he is now entitled to receive in France—this of Colonel, that is an idea which I wanted to communicate to you. You will hear soon of a very disagreeable affair, concerning . . . . . upon which I need not to be particular, but am very sorry any event of that kind might have taken place. With the highest regard and sincere affection, I have the honour to be,

Dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

BRUNSWICK CAMP, 6th July, 1778.

Dear Sir—I beg leave to introduce to you Monsieur Tourad. an officer, whose merit you will easily know in being better acquainted with him. I have written several times to Congress in his behalf, and a new letter of mine is just now sent to the president, which points out some particular circumstances, where he did more expressly deserve the attention of Congress. I will take, my dear sir, as a very particular favour from your friendship, to advise and countenance him in any thing which will lay in your power, as a gentleman I have a true affection for. With the most sincere affection and regard, I have the honour to be,

Dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

P. S. When do you send a packet boat to France.

BRUNSWICK CAMP, 6th July, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I beg leave to introduce and particularly recommend to you, Monsieur de Rienne, lately arrived from France, who did not think of leaving camp, while there was something to be done in it, and who is now going to wait on Congress. Any thing you could wish to know of that gentleman's distinguished family, and long services, you have already seen by a public letter of mine to Congress. I am now writing another, and I leave to Monsieur de Rienne the care of taking it himself, which plan would suit him better. You may rest assured that a corps of horse would prove very useful in his hands. You will be pleased to remember the hint I gave you in my last letter, about a commission to be given to him. With the highest regard and sincere friendship, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your affectionate
The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

ON BOARD OF THE ALLIANCE, 7th January, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, I am told you are gone to Virginia, but I guess you must be back by this time; so at least I wish, because I have desired Monsieur de la . . . . . and . . . . . to take your commands, and I flatter myself, you will favour me with a letter by each of these gentlemen. You know Congress have resolved to send fast sailing vessels this month, and the marine committee have been pleased to permit my appointing some officers to carry the despatches; it is so sure an occasion that I hope you will write me about any public or private affairs, which you choose to entrust to me. After having waited a very long time for an answer I expected from Congress, I think it now my duty not to detain any longer the former despatches. My reasons for having acted and now acting as I do, are explained in longer terms to Congress, and I hope they will meet with your approbation. I always recommend you ideas, which you and myself are fond of, about a Canadian expedition; I really think it of high importance to America, and would be very sorry was such an enterprise thought impossible. I hope you will not be obliged to recall the proposed plan, and that means may

be found of executing it. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me, with the most perfect regard,

Your most obedient humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee.

HAVRE, 7th October, 1779.

Dear Sir—I am to acknowledge the receipt of a precious favour from you, which, in all times, would have been very dear to me, but was the more welcome, that very few American letters are arrived into my hands. From your worthy brother, from Mr. Franklin's despatches, from my own letters to Congress, you might receive any European intelligence that is worth mentioning. I will then, my dear sir, employ the little time that is given to me for my letter, in assuring you again of the sense I have of your friendship for me, which I deserve by the most sincere attachment. Be pleased, my dear sir, to make my compliments acceptable to your brother, Mr. Samuel and John Adams, Dr.
all my friends in Congress, and the city, whom you very well know.

I am sorry that circumstances, in which I hope you will approve of my conduct, have prevented me from being a witness of such successes as Count . . . . . arrival has certainly brought on. *I wish you might be in Congress* on the reading of my public letter. I give a little hint of the warm desire I have of coming again on the American shores. But whatever may be Count . . . . . operation, it will perhaps bring on again some ideas, which should more properly be called *yours*, but which I dare call . . . . by the great delight I had taken in them. In all cases, if something is done in America, I will be very happy to hear. My private circumstances, in this part of the world, are as agreeable as the most wishing heart may any way desire; but I will be very happy in sailing again for America, and with pleasure could bring on such an event.

With the most sincere affection, I have the honour to be, dear sir, yours,

LA FAYETTE.

The honourable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 17th, 1780.

DEAR SIR—Though I am to complain of your silence, I take this opportunity of remembering myself to your friendship, and beg leave of introducing to you Monsieur de Laval and Count de Custine, both of whom command a regiment in the French army at Rhode Island. These gentlemen intend travelling to the southward, and I think we must do every thing in our power for the officers of these auxiliary troops, such of them particularly as hold a high rank at their court. Pursuant to this duty I gave them letters of recommendation for you, and assure you, my dear friend, that, with the highest regard, and sincere affection, I shall ever be your most obedient, humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE, ESQ.

PARIS, March the 16th, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR—What intelligence I may think worth while for the President of Congress to read, I have communicated to the secretary for foreign affairs, to whom I beg leave to refer your excellency; but the personal tribute of my regard and affection, I can only trust to persons, whose sentiments, my good friend, have been long engraved in my heart. To you I owe my first obligations—and to be obliged to you, has been long to me a more pleasing idea. Highly sensible of your friendship, and its value, I am happy in every opportunity to remind you of me; and I know you will be pleased to hear that I am well, and happy with my family and friends. The situation of affairs in Europe made it highly proper for me to arrive at the time I did; but matters are now taking a pacific turn, and, since my return, has ceased to present itself under the idea of necessity. I more than ever lament the shortness of a visit, which I fondly hope to renew in a little time. What has been given to foreign trade in the West Indies, although it is short of what had been demanded, becomes a source of complaint among the merchants of this country, but who might be more tractable, had they a larger share in the American trade. The spirit of Great Britain seems to me, not hostile as some pretend, but averse to the United States, which, by the way, is a very foolish policy. I am glad to hear you are seriously taking up a plan for the navigation of your rivers in Virginia. You will find the Spaniards very obstinate; but every means

must be taken to reason them into proper measures. Above all, my dear sir, do attend to the confederation, to union and harmony, to every regulation that can give security to the commerce, energy to the government, and faith to the public creditors. This Congress is an excellent one, and the fate of future ages does principally depend upon what will be done this year. Impossible would it be for me to express the pleasure I feel, when I hear something that redounds to the glory of America! Adieu, my dear sir; remember me most affectionately to all your family, and Ludwell in particular. My best compliments also wait upon Mr. Arthur Lee. Should you write to the . . . . . send my love to him. God bless you, my good friend. With every sentiment of affection and respect,

I have the honour to be, your obedient humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

My compliments wait upon your colleagues in the delegation. I hope . . . . . is married by this time.

NEW HAMPSHIRE CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, 23d August, 1779.

My dear Sir—It gives me pleasure to find, by your favour of the 8th instant, that you have got the better of your indisposition, and I hope shortly to have the additional satisfaction of being informed that your health is perfectly restored.

The Confederacy is still waiting for her freight; I fancy a late arrival at Boston will hasten her departure. A long political letter has been received from Mr. Adams, in which he gives a high character of his companion in France. I hope this gentleman will receive such impressions in the country where he first landed, as will sufficiently guard him against the pernicious air of Philadelphia. From the character given of him, there is no room to apprehend much danger of his being drawn into party, by the insidious arts of base, designing men, but still it may not be amiss to fortify him against any such attempts. The arrival of Mr. Adams may make a change in some political plans; I wish he would come this way, but I do not understand he has any such intention. The reading of Doctor Lee's vindication, &c. afforded me high entertainment; envy, malice, and every vindictive passion that disappointed malevolence could inspire, appeared on various countenances around the room. Fiddle head shook, swivel eye nestled and turned pale, the chair changed colour at every sentence, some others forced a sneer, endeavouring to conceal their chagrin and confusion; this, you may well suppose, afforded me no small degree of enjoyment. The Base-Viol has tarried a fortnight beyond the time he some time ago set for his departure; he has met with something of late, that has lowered him exceedingly, but what it is, I know not, perhaps it may be the oath you mention. What can become of Ford: it is now ten days since a fellow passenger of his passed through this city, who informed, that Ford had despatches for Congress, but nothing further has been heard of him. It is hinted, by some, that he will not be permitted to pass this way, but those are not remarkable for their friendship for his late employer. I

shall not be under the least concern for the fishery, if a proper person can be agreed on to negotiate the business; but that still remains a matter of uncertainty. The resignation of Doctor Lee, at this time, would certainly be injurious; though, I hope, when he has completed the business that I now expect he is engaged in, he will ask leave to come to America; but, in my opinion, it will be best not to resign; the thought of his coming to this country, would make some of the villains tremble, but, if he resigns, it will be said he has no intention of coming here, and many injurious stories will be circulated, that may make an impression that may give him, or his friends, some trouble to remove. The few select friends, whom you honoured with your confidence, have considered the subject submitted to them; their opinions will be given you by Mr. L——e, or Mr. L——l, who, no doubt, will write you fully on the subject.

It is uncertain when I shall take my leave of this place, but I believe it will be October first. Whenever that happens, or wherever I may be, to hear of your happiness will always be a great addition to mine.

I am, my dear sir, with the highest esteem, and most sincere affection,

Yours,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Honorable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
At Chantilly, Northern Neck, Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 18, 1779.

My dear Sir—When I did myself the honour of writing to you last, it was my intention to tarry here till the latter end of next month, but the arrival of a second colleague has altered my determination; I shall take my leave of this city to-morrow, but I must confess, I shall not do it with the satisfaction I should, if Virginia, and some other states, that might be mentioned, were represented in the manner I have known them.

It affords me particular satisfaction to find, by your favour of the 4th instant, that your health is restored. I hope your influence will make some beneficial changes in the politics of Virginia. I am sure your endeavours will not be wanting, and I am very sure, you are convinced of the necessity of changing men, if not measures. If there is as much virtue and integrity in a certain Assembly, as formerly, there certainly is a languor, a want of resolution, to oppose vice,

and stem the torrent of corruption, that at this time, threatens ruin to America; but, I hope, that persevering spirit, which heretofore faced every difficulty, and looked all opposition out of countenance, will again revive and scatter the cloud that now hangs over us. I expect my retirement will afford me a satisfaction, impossible to be enjoyed in Philadelphia; but, however happy my situation may be, it will ever be increased by hearing of the prosperity and happiness of those worthy patriots, who first stepped forward, braved every danger, and combated the greatest difficulties, and by their virtuous struggles, and unremitted exertions, have thus far rescued their country from the hand of tyranny. Some of your friends, particularly Mr. Laurens, and Mr. Lovell, will give you an account how matters are going on here; these gentlemen, I need not tell you, are real friends to virtue, and, consequently, to those devoted to the cause of virtue. I much approve Dr. Lee's intention, to come to this country, when the Spanish business is concluded. I think it necessary he should have a fair opportunity, of putting to shame, those base assassins, whose malice is wrought up to the highest pitch, by a consciousness of their own inferiority. If he lands in New Hampshire, I am confident he will be received with the respect due, and in some measure, proportioned to his merit. I shall be particularly happy in having an opportunity, of manifesting my gratitude, for his services to America. Notwithstanding the great distance between us, I shall flatter myself with hopes of sometimes receiving a line from you, and you may be assured, I shall omit no opportunity of communicating whatever I think will give you pleasure. Please to remember me, very affectionately, to Colonel F. Lee.

I am, my dear Sir, with the highest esteem and respect,
Your sincerely affectionate friend,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq. at Chantilly,
Northern Neck, Virginia.

PORTSMOUTH, Sept. 15, 1783.

My dear Friend—I am honoured with your two favours of the 1st and 7th of July, and should long ago have acknowledged the receipt of them, had not my absence, on a long journey, prevented their coming to my hands till very lately. You may be assured, sir, that, as it will always afford me great pleasure to be instrumental in promoting the interest of

any of your family, I shall embrace every opportunity to recommend your son, to such of my acquaintance, as have business to transact in your country. The opinions here, respecting the address of Congress, are various; our Assembly have not yet adopted the measures recommended, but I have some expectation that they will, at their next session, which is in October. The local circumstances of this state, points out the necessity of the measure, and though I always pay the greatest deference to your judgment, I do not see the danger of placing such funds in the hands of Congress, under proper restrictions, for a limited time; on the other hand, is not something of this sort necessary to cement the union, on which the well being of America so much depends? It appears to me, that a great revenue should be raised on foreign trade, and if this tax is not under some general regulation, quarrels will surely arise, which will, at least, endanger, if not totally destroy, the union. However you and I may differ in opinion, as to the means, I am sure we have the same great object in view, the good of our common country. This being the basis on which our friendship is built, I trust it will not easily be shaken; I can, therefore, with the greatest confidence, assure you of the unceasing esteem and respect, of your very affectionate friend, and most obedient servant,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

MASSACHUSETTS CORRESPONDENCE.

BOSTON, May 14, 1768.

Sir—By Mr. Edward Church, a passenger in ———, Wilson, who sailed the 24th ultimo, I sent you the Journals of the House of Representatives for the year past. There cannot be a better evidence of the moderation and good temper, with which the affairs of the last session, for the greater part of it, were conducted, than the governor's speech to the two Houses, when it ended. The House of Representatives were constantly attentive to the late acts of Parliament, and almost their whole time was employed in preparing a petition to his majesty, and letters to his ministers, &c. Nothing extraordinary passed between the governor and the House, who seemed determined to carry on business without giving his excellency the least uneasiness that could possibly be avoided. As an instance, they readily complied with his request for a further establishment for Fort Pownal, at the eastward; which I am satisfied was done rather to gratify the governor at this juncture, than from an apprehension of the real necessity of it. His excellency, in the speech above referred to, complains that the lovers of contention have sought an occasion of reviving it. It is not difficult to find by the journals, what gave occasion of uneasiness in the latter part of the session. Had the governor concealed from the House, the letter he had received from Lord Shelburne, which it does not appear he was under any sort of necessity of disclosing to them, all things would have gone on quietly; but when they found that his lordship had passed a censure upon their conduct, grounded upon information he had received, and probably, as they thought, by his excellency's own letters, it is not to be wondered at, that they judged it necessary to take measures to set their conduct right in the mind of a nobleman of his lordship's dignity, character, and rank in his majesty's service; especially as it appeared by the letter, that his majesty himself had approved of the governor's negativing some of the gentlemen they had elected as counsellors, as being done with due deliberation and judgment. The steps which the House took were no other than

common sense, as I apprehend, would dictate to any private gentleman in a similar case. They are published for the world to judge, if there was any contention in the matter, to whom the blame ought to be imputed. It is observable, that where there is a total want of confidence between the governor and the people, which appears to me to be the case in this province at present, suspicions of each other will often take place, and operate to disturb the public tranquillity, and hinder the affairs of his majesty's government in the province from being carried on so prosperously as all good men would wish for. How far the jealousies of the House, in the present case, of his excellency's having misrepresented them to his majesty, as acting from unworthy views and motives in their elections, is to be justified by his lordship's letter, disinterested persons will judge. Such kind of jealousy has long been in the minds of very many, if not the greater part of the people; and I am persuaded that nothing will remove it from the minds of by far the greater part of those persons who constituted that House, but a sight of his excellency's letters, or a declaration from his lordship, if he will condescend to give it, to the contrary. That House has since been dissolved, according to custom, and a new one will be returned this month; I have no reason to think that a cordiality will ever subsist between the present governor and the representatives of the people. Harmony, upon the principles of liberty and virtue, is much to be desired; but prejudices have taken so deep root, that it is not to be expected, which side soever is in fault. If the prejudice be invincible, his majesty's government must be impeded, and both the governor and the people must be unhappy. I now speak my mind with an unreserved freedom, and I hope with candour and impartiality, and not indecently; for, though I can by no means say that I am captivated with his excellency's administration, I should always rejoice in his prosperity; and were he my patron or father, my regards for his ease and comfort, as well as for the people, would induce me to wish for his removal to another government. The board of commissioners of the custom here is extremely disgustful to the people; they are neglected by men of fortune and character, and are viewed, in general, in no better light than the late commissioners of the stamps; they appear to be a useless and very expensive set of officers, and the arrival of their appendages, from time to time, with large salaries, together with the many officers of inferior class, which they have created since they came here, alarm the people with disagreeable apprehensions. The ideas of their being designed

to facilitate trade, are now altered, and they are considered as the regulators of a revenue raised out of the people without their consent, and therefore unconstitutional and oppressive. Besides, it is apprehended that, in a very little time, they will have an influence that will be justly formidable, by appointing as many officers under them as they please, for whose support it is said they may sink the whole revenue: they may have it in their power to form such a connexion, as to make themselves terrible to the liberties of the people. There is an anxious expectation of the event of the petition and letters sent home. It is hoped by the most thinking and judicious here, that the revenue acts will be repealed, and the commissioners recalled; if this should not take place, it is hard to say what may be the consequence. While America enjoyed her liberties, Great Britain reaped the profits of her trade, and had her warmest affection; but, if her liberties are violated by the mother country, and her trade rescinded, where is the bond of mutual affection! The resolution of the Americans, which had its rise in this town, not to make use of foreign superfluities, I perceive, by the London prints, is disregarded there as a mere puff, because, upon inquiry, it was found that the merchants had not stopped their orders for such kind of articles, and these have the usual exportations to America this spring. But I wish that this matter was considered with a little more attention; for, although it is very probable that many persons may break through their agreement, yet there is no doubt, in my mind, but such numbers will adhere to it, as must affect the British manfacturers. There is certainly such a disposition among the people to furnish themselves with the American manufactures, as never was known before; and there have been late instances of the manufacture of a variety of articles much beyond expectation. It is well known what large quantities of the British manufactures are annually consumed in America. Could Great Britain endure a total stop to this consumption? or what part of it would she be willing should be saved? Will not the making of one piece of woollen cloth encourage the making of another? And if this spirit of manufacturing is excited by resentment, as some of your writers allege, is it natural to suppose it will stop short of the utmost possibility? Can any man in England or America, ascertain the bounds? Will it not affect the mother country in proportion to the extent of it? But there is another consideration of great weight. Let the importations from Britain be ever so large, the trade of America is so embarrassed and burthened, that it will not afford the people the ability of wearing fine clothes, and pay-

ing for them, so that, in the course of things, the importations must cease through necessity. I pray God, that those who conduct the affairs of the nation, may be endowed with true wisdom; that all measures, destructive to the common interest, may be reversed; that fomenters of division, on both sides the Atlantic, may be detected and punished; that Great Britain and the colonies may thoroughly understand their mutual interest and dependence; that harmony may be cultivated between them, and that they may long flourish in one undivided empire.

I am, with great regard, sir, your most humble servant,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

June 6th, 1768.

SIR—The bearer of this letter, Mr. John Jefferies, is a young gentleman of a liberal education, and of a good family here. He is the son of Mr. David Jefferies, a gentleman highly esteemed by good men, whose anxiety for his only son, leads him to seek the occasional advice of men of religion, aged and experienced, in London, where he will be a stranger. To gratify the father's request, I mention him to you in particular. As I am influenced by motives of friendship to one, solicitous for his son's *spiritual*, as well as temporal interest, I hope you will excuse the freedom taken by

Your humble servant,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

DENNYS DE BIRDT, Esquire.

BOSTON, March 21, 1775.

SIR—I am much obliged to you for your favour of 4th February last, by Captain Layton. From the beginning of this great contest with the mother country, I have seen Virginia distinguishing herself in the support of American liberty; and in the liberal donations received from all parts of that colony, for the sufferers in this town, we have had abundant testimonies of their unanimity and zeal for that all-important cause. I have the pleasure to assure you, that the people of this colony, (saving a few detestable men, most of whom are in this town,) are also firm and united. General Gage is still here, with eleven regiments, besides several detachments; yet, it is generally supposed, that there are

not more than two thousand five hundred effective men in all. They have been very sickly through the winter past; many have died, and many others have deserted. I have seen a joint list, and I believe it to be a true one, of the royal Irish, and the detachments from the sixty-fifth, in which the whole number was one hundred and sixty-seven, and only one hundred and two of them effective. But though the number of the troops are diminished, the insolence of the officers (at least some of them) is increased. In private rencontres, I have not heard of a single instance of their coming off other than second best. I will give you several instances of their behaviour in public. On the 6th instant, there was an adjournment of one of our town meetings, when an oration was delivered in commemoration of the massacre on the 5th of March, 1770. I had long expected that they would take that occasion to beat up a breeze, and, therefore, (seeing many of the officers present before the orator came in,) as moderator of the meeting, I took care to have them treated with civility, inviting them into convenient seats, &c. that they might have no pretence to behave ill; for it is a good maxim, in politics as well as in war, to put and keep the enemy in the wrong. They behaved tolerably well until the oration was finished, when, upon a motion made for the appointment of another orator, as usual, they began to hiss, which irritated the assembly to the greatest degree, and confusion ensued; they, however, did not gain their end, which was apparently to break up the meeting, for order was soon restored, and we proceeded regularly and finished the business. I am persuaded, that, were it not for the danger of precipitating a crisis, not a man of them would have been spared. It was provoking enough to the whole corps, that while there were so many troops stationed here, with the design of suppressing town meetings, there should yet be one for the purpose of delivering an oration to commemorate a massacre perpetrated by soldiers, and to show the danger of standing armies; they, therefore, it seems, a few days after, vented their passion on a poor, simple countryman, the state of whose case is drawn up by himself, and sworn to before a magistrate, as you will see by the enclosed; thus you see, that the practice of tarring and feathering, which has so often been exclaimed against, by the tories, and even in the British House of Commons, as inhuman and barbarous, has, at length, been revived by some of the polite officers of the British army, stationed in this place, professedly to prevent riots. Some gentlemen of the town, waited on the general on this occasion; he appeared to be angry at it, and declared

that he knew nothing about any such design; he said, that he, indeed, heard an irregular beat of the drum, (for they passed by his house,) but thought they were drumming a bad woman through the streets! This, to be sure, would not have been a riot. The selectmen of Billarica, an inland town, about thirty miles distant, to which the abused man belonged, have since made a remonstrance to the general, a copy of which is enclosed. The general promised them that he would inquire into the matter, but we hear nothing more about it. Some say, that he has lost the command over his officers, and is afraid of displeasing them; how this may be I cannot say.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

PHILADELPHIA, June 26, 1777.

My dear Sir—I intended to have written to you, by the last post, but being under the necessity of despatching some letters to Boston, by the eastern post, which went off the same day, I was prevented. When you left this city, you may remember that the enemy were at Brunswick, and our army at a place called Middlebrook, about nine miles north of Brunswick, since which, General Howe, who had joined his army, marched suddenly from thence, with the design, as it was generally believed, to make a rapid push for Philadelphia, but he disappointed the hopes of some, and the fears of others, by halting at Somerset court house, about nine miles on the road leading to Caryel's ferry. General Sullivan, who, you know, had been at Princeton, made a quick march to cover our boats at the ferry, and, by retarding Howe's march, to give an opportunity to our army to come up and attack them. But the enemy continuing at Somerset, Sullivan advanced with a considerable force, consisting of continental troops and militia, and posted himself at a place called Sourland hills, within six miles of Somerset court house. The enemy were very strongly posted; their right at Brunswick, and their left at Somerset, well fortified on the right, and having the Rariton in front, and Millstone on the left. In this situation Gen. Washington did not think it prudent to attack them, as it did not appear to him to be warranted by a sufficient prospect of success; and, he thought, it might be attended with ruinous consequences: his design then was to reduce the security of his army to the greatest certainty, by collecting all the forces that could be drawn from other quarters, so as to be in a condition of embracing any fair oppor-

tunity that might offer to make an attack on advantageous terms; and, in the mean time, by light bodies of militia, seconded and encouraged by a few continental troops, to harass and diminish their numbers by continual skirmishes; but the enemy made an unexpected retreat to Brunswick, and, afterwards, with great precipitation, to Amboy.

June 29th—On Wednesday last, the enemy, reenforced, as it is said, with marines, marched from Amboy, through a road between Brunswick and Elizabethtown, to a place called Westfield, about ten miles, with a design, as it is supposed, to cut off our light troops, and bring on a general battle, or to take possession of the highland back of Middlebrook, for which last purpose, Westfield was the most convenient route; and it was, also, a well chosen spot from whence to make a safe retreat, in case he should fail of gaining his point. On this march, they fell in with General Maxwell, who thought it prudent to retreat to our main army, then at Quibbletown, from whence General Washington made a hasty march to his former station, and frustrated the supposed design of the enemy. I have given you a very general narrative of the different situations and movements of the two armies, without descending to the particulars, because we have not, as yet, an authentic account, and one cannot depend upon the many stories that are told. I think, I may assure you, that our army is in high spirits, and is daily growing more respectable in point of numbers. We are going on, within doors, with tardiness enough; a thousand little matters too often thurst out greater ones; a kind of fatality still prevents our proceeding a step in the important affairs of confederation. Yesterday, and the day before, was wholly spent in passing resolutions to gratify New York, or, as they say, to prevent a civil war between that state and the green mountain men, a matter which it is not worth your while to have explained to you. Monsieur D'Coudray's affair is still unsettled. The French engineers have arrived; they are said to be very clever, but disdain to be commanded by D'Coudray. The commissioner, D——n, continues to send us French, German, and Prussian officers, with authenticated conventions, and strong recommendations. The military science, for your comfort, will make rapid progress in America; our sons and nephews will be provided for in the army, and a long and moderate war will be their happy portion; but who, my friend, would not wish for peace. May I live to see the public liberty restored, and the safety

of our dear country secured; I should then think I had enjoyed enough, and bid this world adieu.

Yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

PHILADELPHIA, July 22, 1777.

My Dear Sir—Your very acceptable letter of the twelfth, came to my hand yesterday; the confederation is most certainly an important object, and ought to be attended to and finished speedily; I moved the other day and urged, that it might then be brought on, but your colleague Colonel H. . . . opposed and prevented it, Virginia not being represented, it is put off till you shall arrive; you see therefore, the necessity of your hastening to Congress.

We have still further and still confused accounts, from the northward,—— letters are rueful indeed, even to a great degree, and with an awkward mixture, that excites one to laugh in the midst of calamity. He seems to contemplate his own happiness in not having had much, or indeed any hand, in the unhappy disaster; he throws blame on Sinclair, in his letter of the ninth of July; "what adds to my distress, says he, is, that a report prevails, that I had given orders for the evacuation of Ticonderoga, whereas not the most distant hint of any such intention, can be drawn from any of my letters to general Sinclair, or any other person whatsoever," he adds, "what could induce the general officer to a step, that has ruined our affairs in this quarter, God only knows." And indeed Sinclair's own letter of the 30th of June, dated at Tyconderoga, would induce one to be of the same opinion; for he there says, "my people are in the *best disposition possible*; and I have no doubt about giving a good account of the enemy, should they think proper to attack us." Other parts of his letter are written in the same spirited stile. The general officers blame New England, for not furnishing their quota of troops. It is natural for parties concerned, to shift the faults from one to the other; and your friend General Steven, who seems desirous of clearing his countrymen from all blame, in a letter to your brother, says, "eight thousand were thought adequate to the purpose; they (new England) furnished about three thousand," and "for want of the quota the place was lost; if the war is protracted by it, *they* stand answerable for the consequences." The General forgets, that five of the ten battalions ordered from Massachusetts to Tyconderoga were countermanded, and are now at Picks Kill. I

will give you an abstract of the forces, at Tyconderoga and Mount Independence, the twenty-fifth of June, taken from muster master, Colonel Varick's return.

Fit for duty of the nine continental regiments commissioned, non-commissioned, and staff officers included,	2738
Colonels Wells' and Leonard's regiments of militia from Massachusetts, (their time expired the sixth of July,)	637
Colonel Lang's regiment of N. H. militia, (engaged, to the first of August,)	199
Major Stevens's corp of artillery,	151
Five companies of artificers,	178
Whatcomb's, Aldrick's and Lee's rangers,	70
Sick in camp, and in barricks,	342
Men at out posts not included,	218
	4533

Besides a number of recruits, belonging to the continental regiments arrived at Tyconderoga, between the eighteenth and twenty-ninth of June, that are not included in the above abstract. General Schuyler, in his letter of the ninth of July, says, "I am informed from *undoubted authority*, that the garrison was reenforced with twelve hundred men, at least two days before the evacuation." When the commander in chief writes in so positive terms, one would presume, upon his certain knowledge of facts; but as he was not present with his army, let us suppose, (though it does not seem probable, by the general gloomy cast of his letter,) that he has overrated the numbers, and set down only 967, and it will complete the number of 5,500, deduct the sick 342, and I am willing to deduct, the two "licentious disorderly regiments," from Massachusetts; though he acknowledges, they kept with him two days on the march," and there remained near 5000; mentioning this in a public assembly yesterday, I was referred to the general's information to the council of war, who says, "the whole of the force consisted of 2089, effective rank and file." But allowing this to be the case, is an army the worse for having more than one half of its combatants officers, notwithstanding nothing is said of it, in the public letters; General Sinclair writes his private friend, that the enemy came up with the rear of our retreating army, and a hot engagement ensued; other accounts say, that many were killed on both sides, that our troops beat off the enemy, and that Colonel Francis of Massachusetts, and some of his

officers, are among the slain. I shall not write you another letter for I hope to see you soon,

Adieu my friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

P. S. By the letters immediately preceding the disaster, the enemy were said to consist of 5,600, by the enclosed account 7,900; which is the most to be relied on, I know not, both may be uncertain.

BOSTON, April 20, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR—I most heartily congratulate you on the happy and important news from Europe, which will be conveyed to Congress by Mr. Dean, the brother of our late commissioner, who will be so kind as to deliver you this letter. France has acted with magnanimity, while Britain continues to discover that meanness and poverty of spirit, which renders her still more than ever, contemptible in the eyes of all sensible people. The moderation of France, is such, as becomes a great and powerful nation. Britain, forgetful of her former character, sinks into baseness in the extreme. The one is generously holding out the arm of protection to a people most cruelly oppressed, while the other is practising the arts of treachery and deceit, to subjugate and enslave them. This is a contrast which an ancient Britain would have blushed to have had predicted to him; it is a true contrast, and we will blush for them.

Commissioners we are again told, are coming out to treat with us: this is what we had reason to expect; her only design is to amuse us, and thereby to retard our operations, till she can land her utmost force in America. We see plainly, what part we are to take; to be beforehand of her, and by an early stroke, to give her a mortal wound. If we delay our vigorous exertions till the commissioners arrive, the people abroad may, many of them will, be amused with the flattering prospect of peace, and will think it strange if we do not consent to a cessation of arms, till propositions can be made and digested. This carries with it an air of plausibility, but from the moment we are brought into the snare, we may tremble for the consequence. As there are every where artful tories enough, to distract the minds of the people, would it not be wise for the Congress, by a publication of their own, to set this important intelligence in a

clear light before them, and fix in their minds the first impression in favour of truth? for I do assure you, it begins to be whispered by the tories, and as soon as they dare to do it they will speak aloud, that this is but a French finesse and that Britain is the only real friend of America. Should not the people be informed with the authority of Congress, that Britain persists in claiming a right to tax them, ? and that the new or intended act of Parliament, expressly declares her intention to be only a suspension of the exercise of that right till she shall please again to exercise it—that is, till she shall have lulled them into a state of security—that her commissioners are not to be vested with full powers to finish any treaties, nor even to promise a ratification of them. This will be left in great uncertainty till it shall be considered in Parliament. They are allowed, as one of our friends expresses it, to proclaim a cessation of hostilities, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as in confidence of it, our militia are allowed to go home. They may suspend the operation of prohibitary acts of trade, and take off that suspension, when our merchants in consequence of it, shall have been induced to send their ships to sea. In short, they may do every thing that may tend to distract and divide us, but nothing that can afford us security. The British court have nothing in view, but to divide by means of their commissioners, of this they entertain sanguine expectations; for I am well assured, that they say they have *certain advice*, that they have a large party in the Congress, *almost a majority*, who are for returning to their dependency! this cannot be true. Doctor Franklin, in a letter of the 2d of March, informs me, that America at present stands in the highest light of esteem throughout Europe, and he adds, a return to dependence on England, would sink her into eternal contempt. Be pleased to present my due regards to all friends, and acquaint my worthy colleagues, that Mr. Dean's great haste prevents my writing to them. I intend to set out on my journey to Yorktown next week, where I hope for the pleasure of seeing you. In the mean time be assured, that I am, your affectionate

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

P. S. I thank you for your favour of March 1st, which I received three days ago.

PHILADELPHIA, January 15th, 1781.

My dear Sir—Your second letter came to hand in due season. My much esteemed friend, Mr. Arthur Lee, will take the charge of this. I will say to you as I have said to my Boston friends, who were solicitous to know what treatment he meets with here; the more I have conversed with him, the more I have been confirmed in a good opinion of him, and lamented the mistakes and prejudices of some men, and the wickedness of others. His enemies I think, dare not openly attack his reputation or conduct, but the whispers of envy and malice, have sometimes influence enough to prevent the justice due to the virtuous citizen: when this is the case, it affords a symptom of the decay of public spirit, more threatening to the liberties of a commonwealth than hosts of foreign enemies. Monarchs have their favourites, who serve as pimps on their honest subjects, but republics should examine the conduct of their servants with an impartial eye. And it discovers the want of public virtue, as much to withhold their smiles from the wise and good, as to bestow them on the wicked and unfaithful. Mr. Lee, as yet had neither smiles nor frowns. I am still in hopes, he will meet with the rewards, which I am sure he would have received, if he had returned a few years ago; he will have them, when the trustees of the public shall have fortitude enough, to be uninfluenced by great names and characters, given to men of base and depraved minds. You will ask, when that will be, perhaps not in this age; but the historian will in some future time, draw forth the proofs of his patriotism, and unprejudiced posterity will acknowledge, that Arthur Lee has borne a great share in defending and establishing the liberties of America. I say posterity, for I believe a wiser generation will enjoy the fruits of the toil of patriots and heroes in the present day.

My friend, we must not suffer any thing to discourage us in this great conflict: let us recur to first principles without delay. It is our duty to make every proper exertion in our respective states, to revive the old patriotic feelings among the people at large, and to get the public departments, especially the most important of them, filled with men of understanding and inflexible virtue. It would be indeed alarming, if the United States should entrust the ship in which our all is at stake, with unexperienced or unprincipled pilots. Our cause is surely too interesting to mankind, to be put under the direction of men, vain, avaricious, or concealed under the hypocritical guise of patriotism, without a spark of public or private virtue. We may possibly be more in dan-

ger of this, than many of our honest citizens may imagine. Is there not reason to apprehend, that even those who are inimical to our cause, may steal into places of the highest trust? I need not remind *you*, that men of this character have had seats in Congress from the beginning. Where is Galloway, Low, Allen, and Alexander? If it was so in those times of vigilance and zeal, how much more is it to be expected when the love of many is waxen cold, and their minds are distracted with the pursuit of pleasure and exorbitant riches. We cannot be persuaded to believe, that bad men have been sent by their states with a view of giving a fatal stab to our cause in its infancy; but, is it unreasonable to suppose that their elections were secretly influenced by artful men, with that design? Our most dangerous enemies may be in our bosoms.

My regards to Mrs. Lee, &c. Adieu, and believe me to be your friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

BOSTON, December 9th, 1784.

My dear Sir—You will perceive you are not altogether unacquainted with Colonel Walker, who will deliver you this letter, when you recollect, in the early stage of the late war, he discovered himself to be a warm and judicious friend of our cause; that he advanced his money for the support of our troops when they entered into Canada, and that you afterwards saw him in Philadelphia. He is among the earliest asserters of our liberties, for which he suffered great injury, and nearly the loss of his life, in Canada, long before hostilities began. He carries with him the strongest evidence of the abuse he then met with, and his honourable scars recommend him to the notice and friendship of every true patriot.

Colonel Walker is a man of sense and knowledge, and well acquainted with Canada, having many years ago removed from this town, and resided in that province; he is, therefore, capable of giving you the best information respecting the interest of the United States in that quarter. I know your attachment to an early, constant, and persevering patriot, and that you are ever ready to render to such a man the best service in your power. Adieu my friend. Your affectionate

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Honourable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

BOSTON, December 23d, 1784.

My dear Sir—I congratulate our country on the choice Congress has lately made of a president. He who fills that chair is the most respectable citizen; and, while he performs his duty well, he adorns the most dignified station in your confederated republic.

You observe in your letter to me, that, at this moment, moderation, wisdom, firmness, and attention, are the principles proper for our adoption. I agree with you, and devoutly wish that every man who has a share in the administration of public affairs, may possess a large portion of those and other great qualities. They are, in a particular manner, necessary to him who presides in the important councils of the American amphyction.

Congress has need to watch, lest the commonwealth suffer harm. I doubt not they will be assiduous in their labours for the public welfare; and I pray God they may be his honoured instruments in exalting to the highest pitch of human happiness that people, who have testified to the oppressed world, that by patience, fortitude, and perseverance, the iron rod can be wrested from the arm of a tyrant, and that all nations may be free, if they will magnanimously contend for their liberty.

By God's blessing on the councils and the arms of our country, we are now ranked with nations; may he keep us from exulting beyond measure. Great pains are yet to be taken, and much wisdom is requisite, that we may stand as a nation in a respectable character. Better it would have been for us to have fallen in our highly famed struggle for our rights, or even to have remained in our ignoble state of bondage, hoping for better times, than now to become a contemptible nation. The world have given us an exalted character, and thus have laid on us a heavy tax! They have raised expectations from us! How shall we meet those expectations? They have attributed to us wisdom! How shall we confirm them in this opinion of us? Inexperienced, as we are, in the refinements of nations, can we expect to shine in the world as able politicians? Shall we then be hacknied in the path of deception, because some others, famed for their dexterity in politics, have long trod that path, and thought they have gained advantage by it? or, because it is said all nations are self-interested, and that *no friendship in treaties* and national transactions, is almost as proverbial as *no friendship in trade*, shall we depart from that excellent rule of equity, the observance of which should be character-

istic of all nations, especially republics, as it is of all good men, to do to others as we would have them do to us? Could we be induced thus to prostitute ourselves, how should we appear in the eyes of the virtuous and wise? Should there be found a citizen of the United States so unprincipled as to ask, what will become of us if we do not follow the corrupt maxims of the world? I should tell him, that the strength of a republic is consolidated by its virtues, and that righteousness will exalt a nation. Was it true, as some affirm, that the old world is absorbed in all kinds of vice, unhumanized and enslaved, it would indeed be a melancholy subject to contemplate, and I should think that common prudence would dictate to a nation, situated as we are, to have as little to do with them as possible. Such indiscriminate censure, however, may spring from ignorance of the world, or unreasonable prejudice. Nations, as well as individuals, have different characters. We should not forget the friendship and kindness of *one*, because we have experienced the injustice and cruelty of *another*. But the inconstancy of friendship, and even infidelity, has been seen often enough among individuals, to lead wise men to suppose it may happen in any case, and to excuse a kind of circumspection; different from base suspicion, consistent with the generous sentiments of friendship, and, considering the weakness of the human mind, a necessary guard. Does not the true policy, the honour and safety of our country, greatly depend upon a national character, consisting, among other particulars, in simplicity and candour in all her public transactions; showing herself, in reality, friendly to those to whom she professes to be a friend. A constant regard to mutual benefit in commercial treaties; suspecting the honesty of those who will not deal with her on equitable principles, and guarding her trade against their selfish designs by wise commercial laws; an exact and punctilious fulfilment of obligations, on her part, to be performed by virtue of *all* treaties; and, an unalterable determination to discharge her national debts with all possible speed. If, my honoured friend, the leading men in the United States would, by precept and example, disseminate, through the lower classes of people, the principles of piety to God, love to our country, and universal benevolence, should we not secure the favour of heaven, and the honour and esteem of the wise and virtuous part of the world? Great Britain, though she has concluded a treaty of peace with us, appears to be not a cordial friend. She cannot forget her unparalleled injustice towards us, and naturally supposes there can be no forgiveness on our part. She seems to have meant nothing more

than a truce. A sensible gentleman, very lately from Canada, informs me that General Haldiman, who is going to England, has ordered those posts to be reenforced, which, by treaty, were to be delivered to us. Encroachments are made, as I apprehend, on our eastern territories. Our fishery may, under some frivolous pretence, be next interrupted. Should we not guard ourselves against British intrigue and factions? Her emissaries, under the guise of merchants, repenting refugees, schoolmasters, and other characters, unless care is taken, may effect another and fatal revolution. The commonwealth of England lasted twelve years, and then the exiled king was restored with all the rage and madness of royalty! A caution to the citizens of the United States, zealously to counteract the hopes our enemies entertain of "discord, disunion, and apathy on our part;" to watch over the public liberty and safety with a jealous eye, and to practise the moral and political virtues, upon which the very existence of a commonwealth depends. Mrs. Adams desires me to present her respectful compliments to you and your connexions.

I am, with great esteem, your affectionate friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee,
President of Congress.

BOSTON, December 3, 1787.

My dear Sir—I am to acknowledge your several favours of the 5th and 27th of October, the one by the post, and the other by our worthy friend, Mr. Gerry. The session of our general court, which lasted six weeks, and my station there requiring my punctual and constant attendance, prevented my considering the new constitution, as it is already called, so closely as it was necessary for me, before I should venture an opinion.

I confess, as I enter the building I stumble at the threshold; I meet with a national government, instead of a federal union of sovereign states. I am not able to conceive, why the wisdom of the convention lead them to give the preference to the former, before the latter. If the several states in the union, are to become one entire nation, under one legislature, the powers of which shall extend to every subject of legislation, and its laws be supreme, and control the whole, the idea of sovereignty in these states, must be lost. Indeed, I think, upon such a supposition, those sovereignties ought to be eradicated from the mind; for they would be *imperia in imperio*,

justly deemed a solicism in politics, and they would be highly dangerous, and destructive of the peace, union, and safety of the nation. And can this national legislature be competent to make laws for the *free* internal government of one people, living in climates so remote, and whose "habits and particular interests" are, and probably always will be so different. Is it to be expected, that general laws can be adapted to the feelings of the more eastern, and the more southern parts of so extensive a nation? It appears to me difficult, if practicable; hence then, may we not look for discontent, mistrust, disaffection to government, and frequent insurrections, which will require standing armies to suppress them in one place and another, where they may happen to arise; or, if laws could be made, adapted to the local habits, feelings, views, and interests of those distant parts, would they not cause jealousies of partiality in government, which would excite envy, and other malignant passions, productive of wars and fighting? But, should we continue distinct sovereign states, confederated for the purposes of mutual safety and happiness, each contributing to the federal head, such a part of its sovereignty, as would render the government fully adequate to those purposes, and *no more*, the people would govern themselves more easily, the laws of each state being well adapted to its own genius and circumstances, and the liberties of the United States, would be more secure than they can be, as I humbly conceive, under the proposed new constitution. You are sensible, sir, that the seeds of aristocracy began to spring even before the conclusion of our struggle for the natural rights of men; seeds, which, like a canker worm, lie at the root of free governments. So great is the wickedness of some men, and the stupid servility of others, that one would be almost inclined to conclude, that communities cannot be free; the few haughty families, think *they* must govern; the body of the people tamely consent, and submit to be their slaves. This unravels the mystery, of millions being enslaved by the few! But I must desist; my weak hand prevents my proceeding farther at present. I will send you my poor opinion of the political structure, at another time. In the interim, oblige me with your letters; and present mine and Mrs. A's best regards to your lady and family, Colonel Francis, Mr. A. L. if with you, and other friends, and be assured, that I am, very affectionately, yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

P. S. As I have thought it a piece of justice, I have ventured to say, that I had often heard from the best patriots from Vir-

ginia, that Mr. G. Mason, was an early, active, and able advocate for the liberties of America.

BOSTON, March 4, 1789.

My dear Sir—Will you permit me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Jeremiah Allen, who expresses his wish to be made known to you, and your circle; he is a gentleman that has seen the world, and is a friend to our happy revolution, and the republican constitutions of the United States. Mr. Allen has given me short notice, which prevents my writing to you more largely, but shall expect your letters frequently. I wish you that wisdom, which is profitable to direct, in the arduous affairs you must attend to. Remember me to your brother, and my friend, Arthur Lee, Esq. and to every one who knows me, and is attached to an efficient, but free federal government.

I am, affectionately, yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

BOSTON, April 22, 1789.

My dear Sir—You must not expect long letters from me, for a reason which I have heretofore given you; possibly, however, I may trouble you with more frequent letters. I hope the federal Congress is vested with powers, adequate to all the great purposes of the federal union; and, if they have such adequate powers, no true and understanding federalists would consent, that they should be trusted with more; for more would discover the folly of the people in their wanton grant of power, because it might, and considering the disposition of the human mind, without doubt, would be wantonly extended to their injury and ruin. The powers vested in government by the people, the only just source of such powers, ought to be critically defined, and well understood; least, by a misconstruction of ambiguous expressions, and by interested judges too, more power might be assumed by the government, than the people ever intended they should possess. Few men are contented with less power than they have a right to exercise: the ambition of the human heart grasps at more; this is evinced by the experience of all ages.

Will you give me leave to mention to you, the name of Leonard Jarvis, Esq. a gentleman, to whose agreeable acquaintance, though he is a native of this town, I introduced myself by the request of our worthy friend, General Whipple. Mr. Jarvis is a very sensible republican, and an honest man; he holds the place of comptroller general, in this commonwealth. I believe Mr. Dalton can show you a specimen of his industry, and accuracy in business. It is not by his solicitation, or even knowledge, that I write this. I am induced to it, because I think that good men, living at a distance from the seat of the federal government, and capable of serving the United States, should be made known.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Senate, in Congress of the United States.

BOSTON, July 14, 1789.

Dear Sir—I have not lately heard from you, and am ready to impute it to the multiplicity of affairs in which your mind is employed. You must not expect that I shall be even with you upon the epistolary score, for the reason which I have heretofore given you. I wish to know from *you* the state of federal affairs as often as your leisure may admit. We organize our state governments, and I heartily wish that their authority and dignity may be preserved within their several jurisdictions, as far as may be consistent with the purposes for which the federal government is designed. They are, in my opinion, petit politicians, who would wish to lessen the due weight of the state governments; for I think the federal must depend upon the influence of these to carry their laws into effect; and while those laws have for their sole object, the promoting the purposes of the federal union, there is reason to expect they will have the due support of the state authorities. *Places* are now become the object of multitudes; I mentioned to you, in a former letter, the name of Leonard Jarvis, Esq., whom I hope you will not forget. Israel Keith, Esq. wishes to have the place of marshal, for this district, he is a gentleman of the law, and was during the war, aid-de-camp to General Heath, who I understand has recommended him to the president. You will gratify the wishes of Mr. Keith, as far as shall consist with your

own ideas of propriety. And be assured, that I am sincerely your friend.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. I have been informed that Mr. Edward Church, a native of this town, but now an inhabitant of Georgia, is in the city of New York; I take him to have been a steady friend to the liberties of our country, and a man of sense and integrity; if it will not weary you with applications, I will beg your notice of him, and after your own inquiries afford him your influence, if you shall think it proper, in promoting him to a suitable employment under Congress, in the state of Georgia. This I mention without his solicitation, or even knowledge.

BOSTON, August 24th, 1789.

My dear Sir—Your very acceptable letter of the 8th current, came to me by the post. You flatter me very much when you tell me, that any sentiment of mine can please you: I have always been apprehensive, that through the weakness of the human mind often discovered in the wisest and best of men, or the perverseness of the interested and designing, in as well as out of government, misconstructions would be given to the federal constitution, which would disappoint the views and expectations of the honest among those who acceded to it, and hazard the liberty, independence, and happiness of the people. I was particularly afraid, that unless great care should be taken to prevent it, the constitution in the administration of it, would gradually, but swiftly and imperceptibly run into a consolidated government, pervading and legislating through all the states, not for federal purposes *only*, as it professes, but in all cases whatsoever: such a government would soon totally annihilate the sovereignty of the several states, so necessary to the support of the confederated commonwealth, and sink both in despotism. I know these have been called vulgar opinions, and prejudices; be it so—I think it is Lord Shaftsbury, who tells us, that it is folly to despise the opinions of the vulgar; this aphorism, if indeed it is his, I eagerly caught from a *nobleman*, many years ago, whose writings in some accounts, I never much admired. Should a strong *federalist*, as some call themselves, see what has now dropt from my pen, he would say that I am an anti-fed, an *amendment monger, &c.;* those are truly vulgar terms, invented and used by some, whose feelings

would be sorely wounded to be ranked among such kind of men, and invented and used for the mean purpose of deceiving and entrapping others, whom *they* call the vulgar; but in this "*enlightened*" age, one should think there was no such *vulgar*, to be thus amused and ensnared. I mean, my friend, to let you know, how deeply I am impressed with a sense of the importance of amendments; that the good people may clearly see the distinction, for there is a distinction, between the *federal* powers vested in Congress, and the *sovereign* authority belonging to the several states, which is the palladium of the private and personal rights of the citizens. I freely protest to you, that I earnestly wish some amendments may be judiciously and deliberately made, without partial or local considerations; that there may be no uncomfortable jarrings among the several powers; that the whole people may in every state contemplate their own safety on solid grounds, and the union of the states be perpetual. I hope that you have recovered your health, so valuable to our country. Your letter requires a further consideration: I will at present only express my astonishment, at the strange and absurd opinion, of our former *republican Connecticut* friend —Tempora mutantur, et hic mutatur in illis.

Your friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

BOSTON, August 29th, 1789.

My dear Sir—The power of removing federal officers at the pleasure of the president, is to be found in the constitution, or it is not; if it is, what need was there of an act or decision of Congress, to authorize it? but if it is not, could Congress give so important a power? Liberty—this is the great object of their state governments, and has not the federal constitution the same object in view? If therefore a doubt arises respecting the exercise of any power, no construction, I conceive, should militate with the main design, or object of the charter. If there is a total silence in the constitution, is it not natural to conclude, that an officer holding during pleasure, is removable by the same power that appointed him, whether vested in a single person, or a joint number? I am sensible, it is said, that a single person, being amenable for his exercise of power, will use the utmost circumspection; this may be true, but may not this idea be carried too far in practice? may not some powers vested in a single man, give

him such weight and influence, as to render any restraint from his feeling himself amenable, of little or no effect? If this power lodged in the discretion of a single person, will afford a greater security against corruption, because of his amenability, why should not the power of appointing as well as of removing officers, be given to him? in the one case, the gracious hand may be held forth—in the other, the threatening rod, and both may be used for improper purposes. In England, "the king can do no wrong" is a maxim; his ministers are made accountable for him; and how often have corrupt ministers and counsellors been brought to the block for follies and crimes committed by their royal masters, who can do no wrong? and it may also be asked, how often such ministers and counsellors have found means to get themselves screened from punishment, through the influence of their masters, by procuring parliamentary sanctions to such crimes and follies? But in the removal of officers, the president has not a constitutional council, he must therefore be solely accountable. I need not tell *you*, who have known so thoroughly the sentiments of my heart, that I have always had a very high esteem for the late commander in chief of our armies; and I now most sincerely believe, that while President Washington continues in the chair, he will be able to give to all good men, a satisfactory reason for every instance of his public conduct. I feel myself constrained, contrary to my usual manner, to make *professions* of sincerity on this occasion, because Dr. Gorden, in his history of the revolution, among many other anecdotes, innocent and trifling enough, has gravely said, that I was concerned in an attempt to remove General Washington from command, and mentions an anonymous letter, written to your late Governor Henry, which I affirm I never saw nor heard of, till I lately met with it in reading the history; this is a digression to which a man of my years is liable. Who will succeed the present president, for it is the lot of man to die? perhaps the next, and the next, may inherit his virtues, but my friend, I fear the time will come, when a bribe shall remove the most excellent man from office, for the purpose of making room for the worst. It will be called an error in judgment; the bribe will be concealed; it may, however, be vehemently suspected, and who in times of great degeneracy, will venture to search out and detect the corrupt practices of great men? unless a sufficient check is provided and clearly ascertained, for every power given, will not the constitution and the liberties of the citizens, for want of such checks, be finally subverted? A gentleman of this place, who has suffered much for his attach-

ment to our cause, I conceive has documents in his hands, which would be of importance in the settlement of the eastern boundary of the United States, which appears to have been encroached upon by the British. I wrote so long ago, as last April, to Mr. Dalton, respecting this gentleman, but have never received an answer; he, I suppose, is able to give you an account of Mr. Boyd, the name of the gentleman referred to. I wish you would converse with Mr. Dalton on the subject. The vice-president, however, is probably able, and undoubtedly disposed, to give you the fullest account.

I am sincerely your's,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. Pray write to me, and let me know the state of your health, and pay my affectionate regards to your brother the doctor.

PARIS, Hotel de Valois, Rue de Richelieu, March 15th, 1780.

My dear Sir—After my last embarkation for Europe, your letter of October the eighth, was brought me, on board the French frigate the Sensible, just upon the point of sailing, so that I had no opportunity to answer it, in America, and, since my arrival in Europe, I have gone through a land journey from Ferrol, in Spain, to Paris, little short of four hundred leagues, in the dead of winter, in such roads and such accommodations, as almost wore me out. I have scarcely recruited myself enough to recollect what I had to do.

I thank you, sir, for your kind congratulations on my return to my family and country, both which I had the inexpressible pleasure to find in perfect health.

My countrymen are so nice, and so difficult to please, in the choice of a constitution of government, that I cannot say how long it will be before they will adopt one; but of this I am very certain, that they have one at present which is very tolerable, and that the temper and genius of that people will not endure a bad one.

You recommend to me to continue in public life, but you practise the reverse yourself. How is this? Are not the same obligations upon you that you think lie upon me? You and I have had experience enough of public life, to be very well convinced that there are great trials of our patience, very little pleasure, and no satifaction at all, to be found in it. I was never very fond of public life myself, but, on the contrary, I avoided it, with the utmost care, for many years.

But stepping into the midst of civil dissensions, when I first entered on the stage of life, it was impossible for me to avoid having an opinion of my own, and principles like those of the majority of my countrymen; these principles I frankly professed at all times, and in all circumstances, however critical and dangerous, which involved me in an unavoidable necessity, when the times grew more tempestuous, to step on board the ship and take my fortune with the crew; it is, and will ever be, the sweetest reflection of my life, that I did so. But I have ever been thoroughly sensible of the instability of a public courser, and have ever endeavoured to preserve my mind prepared to return to my rocks and forests, with tranquillity, which, I am perfectly sure, at present, that I could do, and with pleasure too. Yet, I assure you, I begin to fear that habits will steal upon me, by length of time, which I shall find it hard to break, when the time shall come that I must retire. This time will certainly arrive with the first moment that I cannot serve the public with honour, and some prospect of advantage; and I have many reasons to suspect that the time is not very distant. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, I have reason to think, from an agreeable acquaintance with him, in the course of a passage to America, of forty-seven days, from some knowledge of him that I had before and after, is a candid and impartial man, possessed of no principles or views inconsistent with his public character, and very able to do service to his country and ours. The same of Mr. Marbois. I lament, most sincerely, the unhappy contests that preceded his arrival, and wish that they may be extinguished; but I know too well the circumstances to expect that they will. As to my negotiations, our sons, or grandsons, have a better chance of completing them, than I have; there is, or at least there was, a system of policy and of military operations, that, if it had been pursued, might have given me something to do. It is not my fault, nor the fault of America, that it was not. The fishery and the navigation of the Mississippi, are points of such importance, that your grandson, when he makes the peace, I hope will secure them. I am sure, he will omit nothing in his power to do, for that purpose. You will hear, before you read this, of a series of good fortune, which has happened to Rodney and his fleet; but the allies will be superior by sea, in America and the West Indies, so that we may hope, that the tide will turn. England will remain without allies, although Denmark has done a foolish thing by restoring to the English some prizes, sent into Norway, by the Alliance; she seems to be sorry that she did it. It was upon the principle, that

they had not acknowledged our independence; and that all powers were their enemies, with whom they had no treaty, a principle long since exploded, and of which they are at present ashamed. Ireland and England are following our example; and if France and Spain act with sufficient vigour in America, and in the West Indies, all is ours, with an ordinary success; otherwise all will be aback. But we must persevere; the more success Great Britain has, the more reason we have to dread her, and we ought to be the more determined to hold out for ever.

I am, with great esteem,
Sir,
Your friend and humble servant,
JOHN ADAMS.

Honourable Richard Henry Lee,
Chantilly, Virginia.

[PRIVATE.]

AUTEUIL, near Paris, February 8, 1785.

Dear Sir—It was with very great pleasure, that I learned your return to Congress, and election to the chair; indeed, so many names that are familiar to me, make me wish myself with you. A Congress, so respectable as the present, must have great weight, both at home and abroad; it is only by sending to that assembly the best men, and most respectable characters, that the people can expect to have their union cemented, and authority supported, as it ought to be.

Our joint letter will inform Congress of the state of our negotiations, under our new commissions, and whatever I may say separately, should pass for nothing. But I really don't expect, that any of the great powers will treat with us here. Spain and England, to be sure, will not, and I don't believe the empires will. Prussia will. Denmark and Portugal possibly may, if the gout, or the lethargy, don't remain too long upon their ministers.

The Barbary Powers, I presume, would make no difficulty, which their eagerness for money would not soon get over. Will Congress order us to advance money enough? And may we use what remains in my bank at Amsterdam? Or, has Mr. Morris drawn for all of that? I expect, every day, the ratification of my last loan, and orders what to do with the

cash in bank; and, also, orders whether I am to open a new loan. Will you be so good as to convey the enclosed to your brother, with my best respects to Francis Lightfoot, &c.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I am,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee,
President of Congress.

[PRIVATE.]

AUTEUIL, April 29, 1785.

Dear Sir—The appointment of a secretary of foreign affairs, interrupts the official correspondence with your excellency, and I know too well the constant employment of the time of the President of Congress, to flatter myself with hopes of many private letters.

I may not, however, suffer my son to return home, as he must go by the way of New York, without a letter of introduction to the president, especially, as so old a friend of his father, and so great a supporter of the rights of his country, is at present in the chair. It is now near eight years since I left you in Congress, and I have not found the service abroad less hazardous, or more pleasing, than at home. I am so little in love with it, that instead of breeding my son to the diplomatic trade and expectations, he is going to college and the bar, where he cannot fail to find more pleasure and profit, and less interruption than his father did; at least, such are my wishes and hopes.

I perceive, I have lately received a trouncing in Congress, and, perhaps, not wholly unmerited. When astronomers are calculating the motions of the heavenly bodies, they are often obliged to neglect *les infiniment petites*, that their results may be the more certain. I do not reckon, however, the "debts," and the "slaves," among those *infiniment petites*. They are great and important quantities, and shall have a proportional attention paid to them. Let me beg of you, sir, to urge the necessity of sending me every information upon these, and all other subjects, committed in any measure to my care, which can be obtained; the numbers and value of the negroes, and other property carried off, in violation of the treaty; the quantity and circumstances attending the debts; the measures taken by the states to prevent the

oppression of the citizens, by too sudden executions, and the necessity of them; and the probable advantages even to the creditors themselves, from the delay. Colonel Smith, who, the Marquis informs me, is to assist me in England, will, no doubt, bring with him much information upon these subjects. I have not the pleasure to know that gentleman, but he shall have all the respect and regard from me, which the relation between us requires.

With great and sincere esteem, and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
President of Congress.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, July 15, 1785.

Dear Sir—I have received the letter you did me the honour to write me on the 28th May, and am fully of your opinion, of the importance of concord between our country and this, and of the causes which obstruct it. The malignity of disappointed men is astonishing; but the change of language, if not of sentiment, of some who have not been disappointed, is more so. In truth, sir, some who foresaw the success of the American cause, attached themselves to it, as a scaffold, on which to mount into power; but having arrived at the summit, they neglect the ladder, and have adopted the very passions and principles of those whom we, not they, have driven off the stage. I don't apply this censure to all: on the contrary, the majority of the present ministry, I believe, think pretty justly, and would do right if they could; but government, although at present possessed of decided majorities in both houses of Parliament, is very weak. There is great impatience and discontent in the nation, and great parties are watching the present minister. If there should be any change, it is problematical whether the coalition would come in, or the Marquis of Lansdown, the Marquis of Buckingham, &c.; the latter party possess sentiments of the relations of commerce between America and Great Britain, the most just of the two; but it is my duty to be explicit. Conviction in administration is not enough; they cannot follow their own lights, and the nation must be made to feel. This is a work of time, and it is dangerous work, because it may, in such inflammable circumstances, provoke war. I hope that persons and property in America, will be held

sacred; that nothing will be done by the people, but in the legal way of petition, and peaceable associations; but I hope they will never have done petitioning, and associating, until the states unite in giving Congress full power to make treaties of commerce and navigation with Great Britain, either by a perfect freedom of trade on both sides, or equal and reciprocal prohibitions or discouragements.

Your letter to Mr. Steptoe, I have delivered to a gentleman, Mr. Stordale, much acquainted with persons connected in India, who will be so good as to forward it, and if I can be of any service to Mr. Steptoe's views, I will. But America and India, are two ideas in the mind of a Briton, which produce an explosion. If an American should be known to solicit an employment in India, for an American, the East Indies would instantly be seen, in imagination, independent of Britain, and in alliance with the United States and France.

This nation, sir, sees that their sciences, arts, trade, commerce, navigation, and wealth, and power, are all hurrying over to America; and the prospect is so humiliating to their pride, so mortifying to their vanity, that they lose their patience, and their final exclamation is, "I had rather America had been annihilated, than that she should have carried her point." Nor is this sentiment peculiar to Englishmen. A great Spanish minister has very lately said at Madrid, that "he wished all America, north and south, under water." European ministers expect a great deal of trouble from America, and they all know that she will always prevail. We know too, that we shall have a great deal of trouble from Europe; but, I hope, we are neither so impious, so inhuman, or so silly, as to wish her annihilated, or under water. The jealousies of old physicians, and lawyers, of young and rising genius in their professions, often stimulate them to acts of ungenerosity and injustice, which, however, instead of crushing the youth, only sharpen his ingenuity, and increase his caution and industry. Nations are like individuals, and Europe must allow America fair play: that is all the world wants; and she will always have one half of Europe, to see that she has fair play, from the other half. The European powers can never agree; there are now on foot, three attempts, which will all prove abortive. Mr. Crawford has been a year at Paris, to negotiate a treaty of commerce with France; and Mr. Woodford, lately British minister in Denmark, is now appointed to treat here with Del Campo, the Spanish minister; and a Mr. Bordieu, told me yesterday, that he is just appointed to negotiate some convention be-

tween the French and English East India Companies. But these attempts, if ever sincere, will produce nothing.

With great and sincere esteem,

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obliged friend, and very humble servant.

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

[PRIVATE.]

GROSVENOR SQUARE, Westminster, September 6, 1785.

Dear Sir—I had yesterday the honour of receiving your letter of the first of August, and I pray you to accept of my thanks for your kind attention and obliging civilities to my son. It was the first news we had of him, since he sailed from L'Orient. I hope that, after remaining in New York long enough to pay his respects where they were due, he made haste to Boston. Your reasoning, sir, both upon the powers of Congress, and the subject of the debts, is very just, and is such as I have urged upon all occasions, both to ministers and creditors. Nevertheless, I expect, that the debts will be urged as a breach of treaty, and as the justification, excuse, or pretence for withholding the posts. I can get no answer from ministers, neither in writing nor in conversation: they make me handsome bows, look at me with smiling countenances, give me civil words, but not one word of explicit answer, except in two or three points, Mr. Pitt and Lord Carmarthen gave me their opinions, which I have reported to Mr. Jay. I hope the states will not wait a moment in hopes of any commercial relief from this court, but proceed to prohibit all exports from the United States in British vessels, until we shall have an open trade or a treaty. A navigation act, in my opinion, will extort terms from Britain, if any thing can; if not, our freights will be a great fund of wealth, our ships and mariners, will be castles and garrisons to us, and the mutual dependence of the states upon one another, will be a strong cement of our union, in interest and affection.

The present ministry, may be the great men they are represented to be; I will not affirm the contrary. It is problematical yet. Their plans relative to the United States, relative to Ireland, relative to Holland, Germany, France, Spain, their own finances, &c., do not yet demonstrate them to be well informed and judicious, much less deep and great

statesmen. Their schemes have been temporary and partial, as if adopted upon the spur of the occasion, to remove a present pressure, or silence a partial clamour. If they had carried their point in Ireland, I will not say what I think would have been their conduct towards America. From the hints which dropped from Mr. Pitt, I am of opinion, they are determined to keep the posts, at least until something further shall be done about the debts. As to taking off the alien duty upon oil, and admitting our ships to their market, the national voice and public opinion are decidedly against it, and therefore you must furnish the ministry, in your navigation acts, an excuse to the nation, before they will venture upon it. I have sent your letter to Mr. Steptoe, but I don't believe I shall be able to serve him in his views; if I can, I will. The United States must establish a factory of their own, among the French, English, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, &c.; the natives will be glad to see them, and the other European factories too, if our factory would treat them with equity and humanity. We should be the most favoured nation. Why should we come to Europe for East India goods? Why should we purchase European manufactures, if we can have India manufactures equally good, and for half the price? Our vessels may go a trading, and carry any thing to sell to the European factors, and get money of them, to buy a cargo of the natives in return. This letter will be delivered you by Mr. Storer, a gentleman who assisted me in Mr. Thaeters sickness at the Hague, and afterwards in the hurry of the conferences for the peace, at Paris.

With great respect and esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

CAMBRIDGE, 9th February, 1789.

My dear Sir—I am sure you will believe me, when I inform you, that it gave me the highest satisfaction to hear that you and your colleague were appointed members of the Federal Senate. I have much to say to you, upon the state of public affairs, but shall wave them at present to inform you, that our friend the Hon. Mr. Otis wishes to fill the office of secretary to the Senate, and that from a long acquaintance with him, I think him, as well on account of his early attachment to the cause of America, previous to the war, and of his services during it, as of his diligence, integrity,

and abilities, a candidate who will do the highest honour and justice to the office, if conferred on him. Indeed I most sincerely wish it, because he is amongst the number of unfortunates who have suffered by the war, and has an expensive but worthy family. If he should not succeed in this, which I hope he will, perhaps you may promote some other appointment, which will be equally beneficial to him. I have only time to inform you, that Mrs. Gerry joins me in sincere regards to yourself and your colleague, and ladies, and be assured I am with the highest respect,

Your friend and humble servant,

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Member of the Federal Senate, at New York.

December 10th, 1778.

DEAR SIR—It was not possible for me to acknowledge your favour of November the 29th, by the same post, which gave me the pleasure of hearing, that you and your lovely family were well: nor will I now particularly notice the subjects you hinted to me. I will rather give you a few entries of our journals, and an anecdote of our friend Adams, to enable you to read the prints with a proper comprehension of the plotting spirit of some of the chaps who are scribbling therein, and of the serpentine, malicious, and elusive course, which others have been contriving for themselves since you left us. Temple came to this city about ten days ago, bringing letters of high recommendation, both to Congress and to the delegates of Massachusetts. His letters were from the council of state, Governor Trumbull, General Washington, Governor Livingston, and the first whigs indisputably of Boston. Mr. Adams conducted Mr. Temple from his lodgings to the president's, to introduce the delivery of the mentioned letters; this *simple call at* the door of the man's lodging, is termed to the public, "so *frequent* in *exchange* of visits," and probably by the very tall wiseacre, who was for constituting a semblance of the French lieutenancy of police, to *fall in with, pimp upon*, and otherwise *entrap*, all visiting strangers, even so far as to write fictitious letters and intercept the answers. But I drop this pitiful subject, only remarking that the hint in the prints, is a good answer to all our recommendatory letters, for there was nothing public or private, which Mr. Temple ought not rather to have communicated by letter, than by a visit. I must give you my key to his whole pro-

ceedings, it is in the cry of the preacher—"Vanity of vanities, *all is vanity.*"

November 30th, 1778. On motion,

Resolved, That Congress meet on Wednesday evening, at six o'clock, to consider the proceedings of the courts martial on the trials of Major General Lee, Major General Schuyler, and Major General St. Clair.

December 1st. A letter of November 30th, from Silas Dean, Esq. was read. Whereupon,

Resolved, That, after to-morrow, Congress will meet, two hours at least, each evening, beginning at six o'clock, Saturday evenings excepted, until the present state of our foreign affairs be fully considered.

December 5th. A letter of the 4th, from Silas Dean, Esq. was read.

Ordered, That Monday evening be assigned for hearing Mr. Deane, and that he be notified to attend.

December 7th. *Resolved*, That Silas Deane, Esq. report to Congress, in writing, as soon as may be, his agency of their affairs in Europe; together with any information which he may judge proper.

That Mr. Deane be informed, that if he hath any thing to communicate to Congress in the interim, of immediate importance, he shall be heard to-morrow evening, at six o'clock.

He published on the 5th, notwithstanding our resolve of the 1st, upon his letter of November 30th. It is true, he dates November blank, to give his piece the air of precedency; but if he *had* really appealed to the public, why write to us on the 30th? He had made himself a culprit before our bar, by refusing to answer any interrogations "tending to criminate himself." He was the cause of often delay. I need add no more to you; therefore conclude, your humble servant, affectionately,

J. LOVELL.

August 17th, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 7th, is in my hand. I am surprised that you had not then heard of the arrival of Ford, on the 1st, at Metompkin. Mr. Adams was at Braintree on the 3d, and Count Luzerne in Boston. I have no despatches from either; but I have a letter from Nantz, of May 25th, an extract of which you will see in the paper of to-morrow,

as well as the continuation of Rowland's communications, of part of what you think ought to be published. You talk of your having a sort of right to a copy of the papers sent by Arthur. You little know of the droll motion made by your *merry* friend, to stigmatize Arthur for having enclosed to an individual, what he desired might be communicated to a select committee of Congress, to prevent the consequences of a *palam* examination of the vouchers. But, as on the one hand I contended for an open reading of the whole that was sent, I most easily convinced the House, that every officer in their service, has a right to communicate *such* papers as these in question, to any individual friend, on whose judgment he chooses to depend, either to present or burn resignations, memorials, and defences, these being personal concerns; and I mentioned having by me some things, thus enclosed, upon which I should act my sovereign pleasure. I thought this necessary, that I may act with a good grace, if I should see cause to give in any of the papers now in my trunk, at a time when it would not be possible to prove a late arrival. The motion was withdrawn, inch by inch, I pledging myself to prove that Congress never had an *official* paper kept from them by the mode mentioned in the motion, viz. covering *despatches* of a minister to an individual. I mean, I pledged myself so far as concerns Arthur Lee, Esq. Your brother was totally mistaken as to D.'s credit here; but I wait with impatience to know more by Mr. Adams. Our Penobscot expedition is not yet well over. Collier *may* do great hurt there. I have a few lines from Mr. Samuel Adams; he is, as you think, greatly engaged in town and *body* meetings, and in the general assembly. They have great expectation of mending the currency by vigorous taxation and loan; but I look for credit to the poor *eastern* states mainly from a successful expedition, though even in that case, W. H. D. will be against them. He spouted an invidious motion about their fleet to relieve South Carolina and Georgia. Observe the cursed rascality of sending to New York, as well as to Boston, the Paca-Drayton effort. Though, in the former case, there is a supererogatory section, of its being a committee information.

I find that paper is stolen from me. It was either Poughkeepsie or Fishkill, you can get it by inquiring of your printer. I have recovered it. The party are provoked beyond measure, at seeing the vouchers sent out by Rowland; but I tell them, "they are free for any member who chooses to use them, only it is at his peril, if he does not guard against offending France, Spain, or Prussia, or exposing *ho-*

nest whigs to danger. The affair of Barker Fort can be put in a light to damn D's, virulence exerted under pretended care of the public safety. Simple views must be first given of the state of facts; and, at the close, a freedom in inferences, reflections, and brands, may be taken; indeed, this part may be performed in the different states upon an exhibition of vouchers here. It will have more effect by springing from different quarters; the main point will be to establish the propriety of supporting merit in republics against envy and falsehood, rather than suffering it to be crushed from a foolish idea of convenience to the public. The contrary would be to induce eventually a *maximum*, to avoid a present *quid detrimenti*. I wish your health may suffer you to attend to this. *Speeches* should be *short*, to be *generally* read.

J. LOVELL.

I will attend to your request about Beaumarchai's charge. I have no reasons now in favour of giving the resignation; but rather the opposite.

18th December.

DEAR SIR—A packet arriving this week, directed to the committee of correspondence, and containing only a letter from Berlin *for Congress*, I took the liberty of opening one directed to our worthy friend, Samuel Adams, in your brother Arthur's hand writing, of which I send you a copy, so far as was material to the public.

PARIS, July 31st.

"Journeys to the courts of Spain and Berlin, have satisfied me that the determined system of Europe is to let us struggle through the war as we can. With the warmest professions of friendship, with the strongest declarations of their being interested in our success, and therefore ardently wishing it, nothing can move them from their quietism and caution, which are carried to a perfectly ridiculous extreme. Spain is totally occupied with its little Portuguese war; France is governed by timidity in the excess; and the three great northern powers are immersed in schemes of plundering the Turk and the Pole, and dividing the spoil. In this situation of Europe, notwithstanding the justice of our cause has rendered all men in our favour, it is not wonderful that

you are left, like Hercules in his cradle, to strangle the serpent that is the terror of Europe. In this situation, it is happy for us that the extravagance of the enterprise has already exhausted the means of our enemies; that, it is certain, this is the last campaign of vigour they can make against us. When our point is secured by the energy of our own exertions, we shall think it happy, that the fears and occupations of the powers of Europe have prevented them from forming treaties with us—when our situation would have given them infinite advantages. When our distresses are past, and our fears subsided, we shall be enabled to see, and to follow our interests in the alliances we form; which I do not think would be entirely the case at present."

Besides this public matter of your brother's letter, he adds a note. "A Mr. Carmichael obtained from me a letter to you, under a pretence of his going immediately to America. I have since found him to be a very unworthy person, whom I can by no means recommend to your patronage." You will see more sentiments of this kind written to Colonel Francis. I wish these hints had come before our late election of Mr. C——.

"One of Monticu's vessels has arrived at Portsmouth, with the following articles for the continental account.

48 brass four pounders, with carriages complete.
19 nine inch mortars.
2500 bombs, nine inch.
2000 four pound shot.
A large quantity of entrenching tools.
3000 fuses.
1,110 ditto for dragoons.
About 18,000 lbs. gunpowder.
61,051 tierces Brimstone.

Beaumarchais's secretary, Francy, is arrived at Portsmouth, and is expected here daily; perhaps he will bring letters from the gentlemen at France, to our committee; but they cannot be later than September. Mr. Gerry has one dated Nantz, the 5th of that month, which speaks of the cowardly disposition of the French court. I do not count this an absolute contradiction of Bingham's letter of October 13th, because a gentleman from America, trading at Nantz, September 5th, might be a stranger to ministerial measures entered into, time enough to reach M. Beaumarchais, through the General of Martinique, by October 13th. However, sir, though I attempt to reconcile their accounts, so as to make

the story of war stand, yet, I am very far from being sanguine in the belief of it. Your brother's history of the temper of the several courts, seems by far the most natural of any other which has come to hand. I expect we shall have an enormous mercantile account from De Francy. I suppose, it is the house of Hortales & Co. which your brother William hints his fears about. You see how necessary his presence was near Mr. D . . . . . ; a letter, from this same gentleman, to Mr. Morris, came open to Mr. Hancock, but the letter covering appeared to be private, so that the enclosed was sent on to Mr. M., without Congress coming to the knowledge of the contents.

Yours, &c.

JAMES LOVELL.

28th December, 1777.

Dear Sir—I shall leave you to get news at large, respecting our army, and the transactions of Congress, from your worthy brother, only saying as to the first, that the extremity of these injuries, which were prophesied some months ago, are now realized in the commissariate; and that we, also, now find most of our high expectations from the expensive establishment of the quartermaster, had not a thorough foundation; General Washington has made this evident, and shown it fairly to be the clue to unravel our many seemingly mysterious, past miscarriages, in the field. As to the second, I will remark, that, few in number, we have vast business, and though we have had particular reason to regret your absence, and that of other ancient members, we must and will go through with what times and circumstances demand to be immediately done. From me, you will chiefly look for foreign affairs. What I have before written, did not destroy Bingham's narrative; what I now communicate goes near to do it; but it leaves our intelligence from St. Pierres, Mignilon, in good force. Private persons at Nantz, September 5th, might easily be ignorant of what Bingham might know, through a public channel, at Martinique, October 13th; but, Mr. Williams gives me the following, in a private correspondence, of October 18th. The politics of this country seem to be, as from the beginning of the war; they rejoice at every event in favour of America, because they wish to see their old enemy crushed; but *that* enemy is still so formidable to them that they do not seem inclined to lend a helping hand to us openly; and every piece of bad news

from America, as it raises the tone of the English ambassador, increases their fears, and the effect is felt throughout all the sea-ports of the kingdom. We have lately had two Jamaicamen seized by the admiralty, and, I suppose, they will be returned to the English; it is true, prizes are still brought in and privately sold; but the purchasers, on account of the risk of having them given up, do not allow above one-third of the value: thus, do the French merchants make great sums of money, and the policy of the nation goes hand in hand with the interests of individuals; it is, indeed, pretended, that matters will take a turn soon. The reason, they say, that war is not more thought of at present, is, that their fishermen and Baltic ships are still out: by the first, they expect an additional number of seamen; and, by the last, a full supply of naval stores, which would be intercepted should a rupture take place now; but that, when these shall be safely arrived, they will hold a very different language to the English. Two or three months will convince us whether these professions are sincere or not; but, I apprehend, some singular success on the part of America, would do more in our favour than any other circumstance.

The Rawleigh and Alfred arrived at L'Orient the 6th of October; between that and the 15th, they had suddenly sold two Jamaicamen, for only 9,700 sterling, as the other two at Nantz, taken by a Massachusetts captain, Kendrick, had been seized; one Nicholson, brother of the Baltimore commander, had a fine frigate, just launched at Nantz, of twenty-four twelves on her gun deck, and six sixes on her quarter, and would be at sea in November, with the other two, which were hove down at L'Orient; the commissary of which port had orders, from the ministry, to supply every thing out of the royal magazines for Thompson and Hindman. Poor Johnson was taken two days after he left Morlaix, by a cutter of heavier metal than his, having fought five hours, lost many men, as well as his enemy, and being towed, a wreck, into Dover. I doubt not, our gentlemen will exert every nerve to protect him from the malice which will be ready to show itself against him after his successes in the Irish channel. Our old Holland correspondent gives us, on the 2d of August, a long detail of Samuel and John Adams's wife and children at the Hague, where, it seems, one or the other of those gentlemen was born and married, but forsook his wife and family to make his fortune in America. "Sir Joseph York knows this, but pretends to be ignorant of it" say their relations; "and though," says Dumas, "this is, at bottom, only a bagatelle, yet I wish to have some short account of the

honourable persons of Mr. Samuel and Mr. John Adams, that I may undeceive our public and confound the impostor, which characterizes impudent and base enemies; they decry you, in Europe, as paltroons, and they, at the same time, pray and intreat the European powers not to permit you to buy arms from them; and, while they fear they shall not be able to destroy virtue, they seek to blacken and calumniate it."

"Let us pass," says he, "this miserable tale to what is more and more agreeable. The prince of Waldeck has two fine regiments of his subjects in the service of this republic, the contract for whom is near expiring; the court of London, knowing this, pressed that prince to let her have them; but he answered, that he had proposed a new contract to their high mightiness, and had demanded some conditions in his own favour, to be added to the former ones; that, if their high mightiness would not consent to them, he would let the king have them, upon the conditions last demanded; but that he could not refuse them to the republic, if she preferred to keep them.

Yours, &c.

J. LOVELL.

BOSTON, 11th April, 1789.

SIR—Your arrival in Congress gives great satisfaction to the old revolutionists in this state. While I presume to congratulate you on the subject, I wish to indulge myself the pleasure of mentioning the success of the supporters of your old friend and compatriot, the honourable Samuel Adams; he has been exceedingly maltreated, or you would have now had him by the hand in the Senate of the United States; but the votes in our late election, a sample whereof, is exhibited in the Gazette enclosed, will evince how much he lives in the esteem of his fellow citizens.

We have a very uneasy party in this commonwealth; composed of the seekers of emoluments under government, and of the old anti-revolutionists; they hate democracy on different principles.

The imprudence of this party, was the sad cause of the disgrace of our people, in the year 1786. The measures their influence obtained, produced that uneasiness, which ended in an insurrection. They now pant for a rebellion, because they think it would end in a standing army, and finally produce a monarchy. But our people are disposed to live quietly,

and when Congress shall pay a proper attention to the amendments, proposed to the general constitution all will be easy; unless a particular partiality is shown by the general government to those, who have affected to be the champions of it. Our people have good sense enough to know, that anarchy, must end in despotism: they have all property, and they want laws and government to support and protect it; they feel as freemen, and they act in that character. However they may be despised and scandalized, by men who cannot gain their confidence; they will cheerfully support a good government.

I send you ..... of General Leonard Jarvis, Esq. he is an honest man and useful to his country.

I have the honour to be, with respect and veneration, your most obedient and very humble servant,

JAMES SULLIVAN.

NEW YORK CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Sir—When I had the honour of your company, and acquaintance at Philadelphia, you made it a request, that I would exert my poor abilities, in the honest endeavour to keep my fellow citizens in the line of their duty, their interest, and honour. I freely made you the promise, and I did honestly and faithfully perform it.

I am informed that the committee of this city, have drawn up a representation of Mr. Rivington's case, for the animadversions of that respectable body, of which you are a member. The consequence of this step, will undoubtedly strike your mind, it is the giving a new power to the Congress; our association, hath given them the legislative, and this now tenders them the judicial supremacy.

The power of government, as of man, is to be collected from small instances, great affairs are more the objects of reflection and policy. Here both join, a mild and favourable sentence, will conciliate the opinions of mankind, and what is the force of opinion, a gentleman who has made it his study to investigate the nature of government, need not be told. I will not pretend to offer you any reasoning on this subject, because it will be tedious to repeat things, which strike your mind at the first glance; but I can venture to assure you, that a favourable sentence to this creature, will be highly agreeable to most men here. The history of his conduct is simply this; his company, his acquaintances, his friends, were warm advocates for the power of government. Indifferently wise, his mind took a wrong bias from interest, deference for the sentiments of others and opposition. A tool in prosperity; a cast off in adversity, he solicits the assistance of that body, which his press has aspersed; magnanimity will dictate to that body, the true line of conduct. The liberty I take in writing to you can only be excused by the intention I have to do good; this I trust will be a sufficient apology, for sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

GOV. MORRIS.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, May 28th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—The friends of virtuous liberty in New York, have certainly effected a most important change, in the political system of that flourishing city. I can gratulate you sir, and your worthy associates in this happy revolution; it is most certain that a profligate ministry, have greatly relied on the assistance of your fine fertile province, for carrying into execution their cruel system, a system by which existing millions, and millions yet unborn, are to be plunged into the abyss of slavery, and of consequence deprived of every distinction, that marks the man from the beast. But happily for the cause of humanity, the colonies are now united, and may bid defiance to tyranny and its infamous abetters. You will see that Mr. Rivington's case, is involved in all of a similar nature, which are to be determined on by the colony conventions, where the offence is committed. I am sorry for the honour of human nature, that this man should have so prostituted himself, in support of a cause the most detestable that ever disgraced mankind. But he repents, and should be forgiven; it is not yet too late to exert his powers, in defence of the liberty and just rights of a much injured country. I I wish you happy sir, and I assure you that I am, with singular esteem, your friend and countryman,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TICONDEROGA, October 19th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I am indebted to you in a thousand thanks for your polite letter, which Mr. Caldwell was so good as to deliver me this day. The utmost of my ambition, is to approve myself a good citizen: an important and comprehensive epithet. You will pardon me if I refer you to my public letters, for an account of our operations; nothing as yet that is decisive. The intelligence which I have received from Congress, respecting the ministerial designs on Hudson river, gives me much uneasiness, as I think it must to every friend to America, acquainted with the geography of that part of the country; but a timely attention, and a vigorous execution of any plan, that may be formed to guard against the evil, may frustrate the designs of the ministry. Were I in Congress, and capable of conveying my ideas with propriety, I should speak for hours on the subject, in order to impress gentlemen, were it needful with gentlemen, of the necessity

of taking this matter in hand without delay. My good wishes attend you through life. I am, dear sir, most sincerely,

Your most obedient humble servant.

PHILIP SCHUYLER.

Dear Sir—Soon after your absence from this city, we began to have a little military news stirring. On the 11th instant, General Mifflin, by directions from General Washington, acquainted the inhabitants at a meeting in the state house yard, that from the late preparations of the enemy, their intentions were for this city. His address was received with as much spirit as it was delivered, and the meeting unanimously resolved to turn out, agreeable to the militia law. On the 13th, at night, Generals Howe and Cornwallis moved to Somerset, eight miles from Brunswick, and on the 19th, at night, retreated again to Brunswick. On the morning of the 22d, they evacuated the last mentioned place, and retreated to Amboy. I am at a loss to account for General Howe's movements on any other plan than the following: his short march from Brunswick to Somerset, afforded him an opportunity of trying the disposition of the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, as to the turning out of the militia, which was very necessary for him to be acquainted with before he ventured too far into the country; it was like moving the previous question, and the issue was against him, for the militia of both states took the alarm instantly. It then became necessary for him to make a retreat to Amboy and a feint of passing over to Staten island, in order that the militia, which his first march had raised, might be dismissed, and the three thousand men from General Putnam, countermanded: both those events have happened, and last Thursday General Howe left Amboy, and made his appearance in the country. He is, I believe, too weak to hope for a decisive victory, and is trying to win it as a game; besides which, as this is their only army, they are obliged to preserve it as an army of observation, on the motions of the French and Spaniards in the West Indies.

I sincerely regret your absence, both on account of your private friendship, and your public services, and I have the pleasure (if I may call it such, for I wish the occasion had not happened) of hearing many others of the same opinion. A man that sets out upon a public bottom, must always expect to be privately undermined, in some quarter or other. I have often remarked, that those who are benefited by the pub-

lic service of another, without feeling themselves rivalled, will always be the friends of merit, but those who are benefited *by* being rivalled, will from envy, ever be its enemies; and thus by tracing a received affront to its true cause, and reflecting philosophically thereon, a person may often draw very agreeable consolation therefrom. We have had nothing stirring of news for three weeks past, when the enemy marched from Amboy, they endeavoured to surprise the division under Lord Stirling; we lost two, if not three pieces of artillery. No other material loss. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate humble servant.

THOMAS PAYNE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 1777.

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
of Chantilly, Westmoretand co.
Virginia.

MORRISTOWN, State of New Jersey, October 27, 1780.

SIR—I have been duly honoured by your agreeable favour of the 24th ultimo, enclosing a letter to the director general, which has been delivered. Since the 22d November, the date of a letter you mention to have received, I have written two other letters, containing such matters as I should be unwilling to have fallen into the possession of some persons, whose heads and hearts, are unworthy of my confidence, and who I fear have filched those letters under way, as you make no mention of having received them. It appears, to me, sir, your apprehensions are well founded, when you observe "I fear the season is much too far advanced, for any decisive operations to be attempted against New York, this campaign," &c., and that your queries claim the highest attention, when you farther add, "may not the winter be most profitably employed in retaking Charlestown, and recovering the two southern states, from our enemies," &c.; the reasons you mention in favour of the attempt, are weighty, and the successes, which have lately attended our arms in that quarter, render the operations you have proposed, both for the winter and spring, less hazardous. The spirited exertions of your state, in raising three thousand recruits for the continental army, and one thousand good western militia, at so critical a period, evinces a redoubled attachment to our cause, and add much to the prospect of success in our operations in that vicinity. I cannot quit the subject, without congratulating you, my dear sir, on the appointment of Major General Greene, to take the command of the southern army. That

gentleman's great abilities in the field, his extensive knowledge of the various departments in the army, gives him the advantage of almost every other general officer in America, in immediately reducing to order and system, an army and affairs, which at present are almost "without *form* and *void*." But alas! of what avail will be the exertion of the greatest generals, unless fully aided with *men*, *money*, and the other necessary *supplies?* In the present dangerous situation of our public affairs, can this aid be furnished? Our treasury is empty, our military and naval stores in that quarter are much exhausted, and I fear the resources of that country, under its present embarrassments, will prove incompetent for those other supplies. Your zeal and exertion in the cause of our distressed country, on every former occasion, forbid my mentioning a single argument to induce your utmost efforts in the present alarming conjuncture. General Greene entertains a high opinion of your influence and abilities, and wishes for your assistance, in support of such measures as he may find necessary to adopt for recovering the southern states, or rather what is more probable, to prevent the enemy, from making further progress; and as the general, is a gentleman in whom you may place the most unreserved confidence, not only as an officer, but as a private gentleman; I have not the least reason to doubt, but there will be a perfect harmony and free correspondence between you and that gentleman, and which I am sure will be assiduously cultivated on his part. The Honourable Arthur Lee, passed through this place a few days since, on his way to Philadelphia; but I was so unhappy as not to have the pleasure of seeing him, though I have been honoured by a line from him, since his arrival there. As the present situation of the southern states bespeaks the theatre of war, at least for the ensuing winter, I should esteem it an addition to the obligations I should otherwise be under, by being favoured with a letter from you, as often as you may find opportunity and leisure, for that purpose. With sentiments of real friendship, I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

NATHANIEL PEABODY.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

PENNSYLVANIA CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 20, 1776.

My dear Sir—An officer (a German by birth) who has served in Russia and Hanover, several campaigns, called upon me a few hours ago, and after producing certificates, &c. that he *now* holds a captain's commission under the empress of Russia, *gave* me the following information in confidence. He says, that he is personally acquainted with many of the Hessian officers and privates, now in Howe's army; that, as they serve for pay only, he thinks the bounty, pay, and clothing, offered by Congress, so much above what they now enjoy, that, if they were properly tendered to them, they would serve us with more cheerfulness than the king of Britain. He offers to go in person, into Howe's army, at the risk of his life, and is sanguine enough to think, he could immediately bring off two hundred recruits with him. He demands continental money only, to pay the bounties; if he fails, he will return the money: he very justly objected to taking gold or silver, as it might be useful to them in Howe's camp. I submit these hints to your consideration. I am bound to inform you, that the captain, (who, from his certificates, is a baron) appears very modest, and possesses the manners and address of a gentleman. He added, in the course of our conversation, that we had many warm friends in Russia, and that a majority of that nation expressed a dislike at the thoughts of being employed to fight against us. He thinks there is no probability of any troops being procured from that quarter next summer. If you think the above scheme practicable, please to mention it in Congress. I am at a loss what to advise in the affair; at any rate, communicate your opinion, or the determination of Congress, to Mr. Philip Bochm, in Philadelphia, who will communicate it to the baron. If he is encouraged, he will wait upon Congress, and receive his instructions from them. We are much blamed by the whigs, and ridiculed by the tories, for leaving Philadelphia so suddenly. All the back counties near Philadelphia, are in motion. Several hundred of the militia, join General Washington daily; I refer you to Mr. Samuel Perviance, for particulars. I have a thousand things to say to

you. Vigour, firmness, and decisive measures, are more necessary than ever. Dispute less, and do more in Congress, or we are undone. Compliments to your brother, and the worthy members of the weekly club. I am on my way to Bristol, being summoned to attend the Philadelphia militia, for a few weeks.

Your's, sincerely,
BENJAMIN RUSH.

P. S. I need not suggest to you the necessity of secrecy, if the baron's scheme is adopted.

NEAR BRISTOL, December 21, 1776.

Dear Sir—Wherever I go I bear in my mind, the small share of the weight of our dear country's happiness, which the state of Pennsylvania hath committed to my care. I wish sometimes, to throw my mite into the councils of the Congress, but as this is impossible for the present, I beg leave to suggest such things as have occurred to me, in my passage through Philadelphia to this place, and submit it to your good sense to make any use of them you may think proper. I need not inform you of the general disposition of the people, in and near Philadelphia, to refuse continental money upon the late prospect of General Howe's getting possession of the city. General Putnam threatening to confine such people as refused it, and declaring the debt for which the money was offered, to be void, produced only a temporary remedy against the evil. People who had goods, refused to sell them; and men who had money out at interest, either refused to give up bonds, or kept out of the way when continental money was offered for them. The legislatures of America look up to Congress for a remedy equal to the danger of the disease. Suppose you recommend to every state to make a law, not only to forfeit the debt for which our money is offered, but to *fine* the person who refuses it, *severely*; this will be more effectual than imprisonment, which from becoming so common for tory practices, has now lost its infamy. The punishment, in this case, strikes directly at that principle in human nature, which is the source of the contempt into which our money has fallen. I mean avarice, and a want of public spirit. Pray don't let this matter be neglected, our salvation hangs upon it. I tremble every time I think of the danger of the further progress of the refusal of our money.

Connected with the above subject, is the state of the loan office; if possible, let the resolutions for the last emission of five millions of dollars, be *concealed.* I hope that it will be the last resolution of that kind that will appear on our journals. If it is not, the whole continent must complain of our injustice, in allowing only four per cent. for the money now deposited in the loan office, unless we can give positive assurance that we shall pay it in hard money. I have learnt from many people, and among others, from two New England officers, that the four eastern states will find great difficulty in raising their quota of men, owing to that excessive rage for privateering, which now prevails among them. Many of the continental troops now in our service, pant for the expiration of their enlistments, in order that they may partake of the spoils of the West Indies. At a moderate computation, there are now not less than ten thousand men belonging to New England, on board privateers. New England, and the continent, cannot spare them. They have a right at this juncture, to their services, and to their blood. We must have an army; the fate of America must be decided by an army. It must consist of seventy or eighty thousand men, and they must all be fit for the field before the first day of May next. Since the captivity of General Lee, a distrust has crept in among the troops, of the abilities of some of our general officers high in command. They expect nothing now from heaven taught and book taught generals. I hope in our next promotions, we shall disregard seniority. Stevens must be made a major general, he has genius as well as knowledge. Mercer must not be neglected, he has the confidence of the troops. Adieu.

Your's,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
Member of Congress.

P. S. Congress must take up the affairs of our money *wholly.* It is a national concern; legislatures are too distant, too languid, and, in many states, too incompletely formed, for that purpose.

CROSSIDES, December 30, 1776.

MY DEAR SIR—There is no toil so dear to a soldier as that which is marked with the footsteps of a flying enemy; every thing looks well. Our army increases daily, and our

troops are impatient to avenge the injuries done to the state of New Jersey; the tories fly with the precipitation of guilty fear, to General Howe. A detachment from our body yesterday, took four of them, and killed one; two of the former, were officers of Howe's new militia establishment. We suffer much for the want of intelligence, which can only be procured by money that will pass in both camps. Howe owes the superiority and regularity of his intelligence above ours, not so much to the voluntary information of the tories, as to the influence of his gold. Pray send two or three thousand pounds, in hard money, immediately, to General Washington; it will do you more service than twenty new regiments. Let not this matter be debated and postponed in the usual way, for two or three weeks; the salvation of America, under God, depends upon its being done in an *instant*. I beg leave, for a moment, to call off your attention from the affairs of the public, to inform you, that I have heard, from good authority, that my much honoured father-in-law, who is now a prisoner with General Howe, suffers many indignities and hardships from the enemy, from which not only his rank, but his being a man, ought to exempt him. I wish you would propose to Congress to pass a resolution in his favour, similar to that they have passed in favour of General Lee; they owe it to their own honour, as well as to a member of their body. I did not want this intelligence to rouse my resentment against the enemy; but it has increased it; every particle of my blood is electrified with revenge; and if justice cannot be done to him in any other way, I declare I will, in defiance of the authority of the Congress, and the power of the army, drive the first rascally tory I meet with, a hundred miles, barefooted, through the first deep snow that falls in our country. Two small brigades of New England troops have consented to serve a month after the time of their enlistments expire; there is reason to believe, all the New England troops, in their predicament, will follow their example. We have just learned, that the enemy are preparing to retreat from Princeton. Adieu. General Washington must be invested with dictatorial power for a few months, or we are undone. The *vis inertiæ* of the Congress has almost ruined this country.

Yours,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

BORDENTOWN, January 6th, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Before this reaches you, you will, I dare say, have heard of the affairs of Trenton and Princeton. At the former place, victory was undecided; at the latter, it was complete. Too much praise cannot be given to our brave troops for the patience with which they have undergone cold, hunger, and all the usual distresses of a winter's campaign: the Philadelphia militia behaved like heroes: at Princeton, like young troops, they broke at first, but, like veterans, were rallied without much difficulty. Much credit is due to a brigade of New England men, commanded by Colonel Hitchcock, in both actions; they sustained a heavy fire, from musketry and artillery, for a long time, without moving; they are entitled to a great share of the honour acquired by our arms at Princeton. General Mercer's death cannot be too much lamented. I had the pleasure of dining with him two days before he fell, and was never more highly feasted with patriotic sentiments; his character was marked with all the traits of one of the heroes of antiquity; the manner of his death was equally honourable to himself and to our cause. I cannot help thinking but that the Congress owe some funeral honours to his memory; perhaps an oration would have a better effect in this case than in that of General ———. What do you think of the Congress writing a letter of condolence to the widow?

I congratulate you upon the addition of Colonel Knox to the list of general officers; he is a brave, sensible, enterprising man. I saw his behaviour in the battle of Trenton; he was cool, cheerful, and was present every where. I have picked up an original letter from General Howe to Count de Donop, at Trenton, a copy of which I shall send you, to be laid before Congress; it contains, among other things, a warrant for plundering the inhabitants of New Jersey; it must be published.

Yours, &c.

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

PRINCETON, January 7th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—I write to you, at the request of General Mercer, to beg that you would immediately despatch an express to Mrs. Mercer, to inform her that the General is con-

siderably better, and there are reasonable hopes of his recovery. I have attended him since yesterday, and shall not leave him till he is out of danger; he is wounded in seven places, with a bayonet; one of these wounds is in his forehead, but the most alarming of them are in his belly; he is in good spirits, drinks plentifully, sleeps tolerably well, and talks cheerfully on all subjects, as usual; from the unfortunate circumstance of his wanting a surgeon at the time he fell, he was obliged to give his parole, in order to procure a surgeon from the enemy, and he is now their prisoner. The loss of the enemy in the battle at Princeton, from the best accounts, amounts to fifty killed, and one hundred and fifty wounded; among the former is a Captain Leslie, a nephew to General Leslie, and the second son of the Earl of Leven. I knew him intimately in Scotland: he was an accomplished officer and gentleman. I wept, for the first time, for a victory gained over British troops; our attachment to each other was reciprocal; for when I was introduced to a Captain M'Pherson, who now lies in this town, in order to dress his wounds, he asked if I was the Doctor Rush who used to correspond with Captain Leslie. I told him I was. He told me he had heard his friend Leslie say, a thousand times, that he forgot in me the political enemy in the personal friend. General Washington buried him with all the honours of war. Our loss at Princeton, amounted to about twenty-five killed, and about forty wounded: among the former were Colonel Haslet, (a gallant officer,) Major Fleming, Captains Neal and Shippen, and Lieutenant Morgan, of Philadelphia. Princeton is, indeed, a deserted village; you would think it had been desolated with the plague and an earthquake, as well as with the calamities of war; the college and church are heaps of ruin; all the inhabitants have been plundered; the whole of Mr. Stockton's furniture, apparel, and even valuable writings, have been burnt; all his cattle, horses, and hogs, sheep, grain, and forage, have been carried away by them; his losses cannot amount to less than five thousand pounds. The enemy, in their pursuit of General Washington through the Jersey's, called his troops the *rebel army;* in their retreat before him, they called his troops the *provincials*, and sometimes the continental army. Major General Grant commanded at Trenton and Princeton, last week, under Lord Cornwallis. When Colonel Roll, who was killed at the surprise of Trenton, on the 26th of last month, wrote to him for more troops, to enable him to hold his posts on the Delaware, he laughed at his application, and sent him word that

he "could keep the whole Jersies with a corporal and four men?" Enclosed is the copy of the form of a protection in English and German. Hundreds have been plundered who have accepted of them.

Yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

Colonel Lee.

PHILADELPHIA, January 14th, 1777.

Dear sir—I left our good friend, General Mercer, on Saturday last *out of danger*, but so exceedingly weak, from the loss of blood, that he cannot be moved with safety these ten days. The commanding officer at Brunswick has given him liberty to go or ride where he pleases. Lieutenant Yeates, of Colonel Reed's Virginia regiment, died on Friday last at Princeton. The circumstances of his death merit the attention of the Congress. In the beginning of the action, on the 3d of this instant, he received a wound in his side, which brought him to the ground. Upon seeing the enemy advance towards him, he begged for quarters. A British soldier stopped; and, after deliberately loading his musket by his side, shot him through the breast; finding that he was still alive, he stabbed him in thirteen places with his bayonet, the poor youth all the while crying for mercy. Upon the enemy being forced to retreat, either the same, or another soldier, finding that he was not dead, struck him with the club of a musket on the side of the head. He languished a week in the greatest anguish, and then died (I declare it upon my honour, as a man and a physician,) of the wounds he received, after he fell and begged for quarters. The savages murdered a clergyman, a chaplain to a battalion of militia, in cool blood, at Trenton, after he had surrendered himself, and begged for mercy. His name was Rosborough. When we complain to the British officers of the hard fare of our prisoners in New York, they ask, why do not the Congress appoint a commissary, and send provisions to them? The enemy have done something like the first of these things for the Hessian prisoners now in this state. I wish the attention of Congress could be roused in behalf of our poor fellows; they are confined in churches, without fire-wood. Twenty have been thrown out in a day, to putrify in the streets. It is a prostitution of language and truth to attribute a fibre of humanity to General Howe's heart; his natural disposition, as well as the nature of the service he is engaged in, have rendered him a mere Jeffries for every species of political

iniquity. I write from good information, having picked up a number of anecdotes which justify the picture I have given of him. I saw an intelligent gentleman, who left New York about ten days ago, who whispered in my ears, that an account had just reached New York, that the court of Britain had engaged 12,000 Russians and 3,000 Germans for the next campaign. He said, the affair of Trenton operated like a clap of thunder at New York. Some cursed the Hessian commander at Trenton; while the most intelligent blamed General Howe for making *his line so long*, as they called it. It produced a revolution in their countenances, manners, conversation, and even their toasts: "A speedy accommodation of the present unnatural dispute," being given at the table of the principal officers. Lord Cornwallis was to have sailed for England the day the news reached New York, but was detained in order to take the command in New Jersey. I hope to join you in Congress in a few days. I forgot to mention before, that I left our army not only in high spirits, but in *good health*. The medical department must undergo a revolution. Compliments to your worthy brother. Yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

PHILADELPHIA, January 14th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Since my letter of this morning, I have heard of the removal of Dr. Morgan and Dr. Stringer from the medical department. I beg you would suspend the filling up their places, till I have the pleasure of seeing you. I have taken some pains to acquire from a surgeon in General Howe's army, a perfect knowledge of the methods of taking care of the sick in the British military hospitals. I can, moreover, point out to you several worthy characters, who should immediately be placed on the medical staff in our army. Dr. Cochrane, of Brunswick, is one of them: he possesses humanity as well as skill, and is dear to all who know him. I have found, from conversing with the surgeons of the British army, as well as from my own observations, that the care of the sick is a matter that engages the attention of even their general officers. Lord Cornwallis, in retreating through Princeton, left five privates and one surgeon to attend the wounded men he was forced to leave behind him. I am sorry to say nothing of this kind was done by our generals, although a General Mercer was numbered in the list of our

wounded. Every captain in the British army is obliged to visit the sick of his company at least once a day, to see that they want for nothing. Considering that sickness sweeps off more men than the sword in all armies, I cannot help thinking, that it is as much the duty of a good officer to save his men by tenderness in the one case, as it is by . . . . in the other. From yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

BETHLEHEM, Tuesday, December 17th, 1776.

DEAR SIR—After much difficulty and expense, I have removed all the sick to Easton, Bethlehem, and Allentown. their number is now much reduced, and all in a good way. I send twenty or thirty weekly to join the army. There is no paymaster or general near us, and I am almost out of cash; I must, therefore, beg the favour of you to procure me five thousand dollars, and send them by the bearer, Dr. Halling, for the use of the hospitals. You will please to give a receipt for me, &c. Mrs. Shippen and the children arrived safe on Thursday morning, and are happily settled in this peaceful town. I have not heard of my clothes and old wine; fear the varlets have them as secure as poor General Lee. Oh! what a damned sneaking way of being kidnapped—I can't bear to think of it. I saw all his troops, about four thousand, this morning, marching from Easton, about two day's march from Washington, in good spirits, and much pleased with their General Sullivan. General Gates, with nine hundred men, marches from this place this afternoon and to-morrow. We hear General Heath is within four days march with three thousand men. God send that all joined may save Philadelphia, and disappoint the cursed tories this winter. Where are your good ladies? my love and best compliments to them, and desire they will take care of themselves, lest our retrograde soldiers will run them down. I wish you would introduce a new step into your army. I am sure they are perfect in the back step by this time.

Compliments to the Adams's, &c. &c.

I am, yours,
Very affectionately,
W. SHIPPEN, Jun.

Colonel LEE, of the Honourable Continental Congress,
Philadelphia.

From a tedious experience, I have learned what is necessary in a military hospital, and think it my duty, to give my opinion thereon, to my friends in Congress. I have attended to this matter more carefully, because I saw on my first entering the army, that many more brave Americans fell a sacrifice to neglect and iniquity in the medical department than fell by the sword of the enemy. I saw directors but no direction, physicians and surgeons, but too much about their business, and the care of the sick committed to young boys, in the character of mates, quite ignorant, and, as I am informed, hired at half price, &c. &c. &c. ; some I found honestly doing the duty of their stations. How far my own department has been better filled, does not become me to say, and I am not ashamed to own, that I am conscious of many imperfections, but flatter myself, none of them have arisen from want of care and integrity in the director, or skill and industry, in his physicians, surgeons and mates ; all the latter, he can with pleasure declare, have done more than their duty cheerfully. Some have arisen from my inexperience, some from the scarcity of many articles necessary for the sick, and more from the distracted, flying state of our army. All these causes, I persuade myself, will in a great measure be removed in the next campaign, if our cruel enemies risk another. I would humbly propose the following arrangement as necessary, and I hope adequate to making the sick soldiery comfortable and happy : suppose three armies, a *northern, middle,* and *southern,* to each of these the following officers—

1	director and surgeon general,	at 35*s* 0*d*		and 8	rations.
3	sub or assistant directors, -	22	6	and 6	do.
10	surgeons or physicians, - -	20	0	and 4	do.
20	mates - - - - -	7	6	and 2	do.
1	apothecary general, - -	20	0	and 4	do.
4	mates, - - - - -	7	6	and 2	do.
1	to act as quartermaster and commissary general, - -	12	6	and 4	do.
3	deputies, or one to every hundred sick, - - - -	7	6	and 2	do.
1	steward to every hundred sick,	5	0	and 2	do.
1	matron to do. - -	3	9	and 2	do.
1	ward master to do. - -	5	0	and 1	do.
1	nurse to every 15 sick, - - instead of one to every ten, at	10	0	per week,	

	7s 6d; they are not to be had at *7s 6d*.	
1	to act as secretary, and store-keeper to every hospital, -	*7s 6d* and 2 rations.

The directors general and sub-directors to be chosen by the Congress; the physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, by the directors.

The mates, by the physicians and surgeons, after a strict examination. All other officers, by the directors. Not less than this, in my opinion, will induce men properly qualified to engage; and any others, will be dear at any price.

I have the honour to be,
dear sir,
Your very humble servant,
WILLIAM SHIPPEN, Jun.

No regimental hospitals will be now necessary. To every regiment, should be appointed by the Congress, after being examined and recommended by the directors, and physicians, and surgeons of the hospital, or by three or four, of the most eminent in any state, appointed by that state for the purpose,

1	surgeon, -	at 12*s* 6*d* and 4 rations, per diem.
and 2	mates, -	6*s* 3*d* and 2 do.

To be supplied with one case of amputating and trepanning instruments, one case of pocket ditto, and such a chest of medicines, as the directors shall think proper.

Bethlehem, 20th December, 1776.

PHILADELPHIA, 17th January, 1777.

My dear Sir—The sick soldiery are suffering for want of some new arrangement; I am pleased, that you have adopted mine so far as to dismiss the two directors, it gives general joy to the army. We want assistant directors, the army and sick are so scattered; and the pay of our physicians and surgeons must be augmented to 20*s*. or three dollars, or no men of education will engage; these things must be done immediately. There will some difficulties arise, if the sub-directors and surgeons are not equal in their pay, because those who stand first on the list for promotion, are not the fittest for directors. Suppose sub-directors and surgeons are

allowed 20*s*., and there were assistant surgeons at 15*s*., and mates at 7*s*. and 6*d*. You cannot conceive the disorder I found the sick in here, every body directing, and every body bringing in accounts. I am now busily engaged in reducing them to a little regularity, which I hope I shall effect in four or five days; in the mean time, I am much wanted in the army, and at my other hospitals. Don't forget Doctor Cochran as one of my assistant directors. Can't Doctor Jones be enlisted for the northern department, and Foster, Warren, &c., his assistants?

Would it not answer good purposes, and save the Congress much trouble, if I was called inspector general of the whole and director of the middle department? I should then have a right to look into the conduct of all the hospitals and receive returns from them, and order what proportion of medicines should go to each, &c. I write any thing and every thing to you, knowing your friendship and as I flatter myself you think, I will exert my honest endeavours to serve this great cause. It would be a great thing if we could have six weeks peace now, that our soldiers might be inoculated; many of them have the small-pox, and I fear all the brave Virginians will take it. How do you all do? God bless you, and believe me sincerely,

Your affectionate,

WILLIAM SHIPPEN, Jun.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

P. S. The New York battalions are all complete. Two thousand have marched from this place within three days. We shall do for them.

My dear Brothers—I enclose a letter written to any body you think proper, containing my idea of a military hospital, as frugal as I think consistent with the good comfort of the sick soldiery. The abuses, the neglect and fraud, in M. . n's department, has been of more disservice to the new army, than any other circumstance I know of—(not paying the men is another sad thing, very few have received any pay for four months.) The New Englandmen say they will not serve if M . . n is director. The following are facts that can be proved, but I should not choose to be called on:

1. He appointed his own apprentice, who had not been with him three months, apothecary general, at fifty dollars a

month; pocketed the whole, and charged the youth for his board.

2. He has eight or ten mates at 3*s*. 9*d*. a day, and charges the continent 7*s*. 6*d*.; they are quite ignorant.

3. From fifty to one hundred sick, are entirely trusted to these boys.

4. There always have been a great abundance of stores locked up, and with great expense removed from place to place, greater than the first cost, and the sick perish for want of them. Hundreds in Hackinsack, lying on straw, in cold barns, with nothing but beef and bread to eat.

5. He makes money of the tallow, by making candles and selling them to the hospital, therefore nothing but beef given them: this I have from his quarter master, who was to have part of the profit; and I am told, he pockets all the retained rations, but this I cannot prove, nor should I choose to be called upon to prove any thing. I have my information from the united voice of his own officers. Methinks I hear you say, yet this is the man you would have chosen—but, good God! did you or I believe he could be so damned a rogue! General Gates, who has spent two days with us here, gives as bad a character of Dr. Stringer, the northern director. If you think proper to show the enclosed to Congress, do it; if to particular members, do it; any how, let Messrs. Adams, Gerry, Rush, Morris, &c. see it. I know I shall have your and their interest for my proper place, and when you find me tripping, turn me out.

General Howe is now stopped, and I believe, for the winter. Washington is strong, being reinforced by Sullivan and Gates, with four thousand brave northern troops, who passed through this place two days ago. There is a certain account of twelve thousand men coming from Massachusetts—the extremes must save us. Where are the Virginia light horse, &c.? Our troops begin to recollect themselves and again think of bush fighting; they scout and skirmish every day with success, and begin to grow bold. The New York men have raised their complement for the army, and intend doing more.

I am desired by some of the northern members of Congress, to recommend to your interest, Doctors Foster and Warren, these are strong arguments, and I believe they are clever in the profession; they are the two first on . . . . . list; I am only afraid they have lived too long in the sphere of this action. Dr. Foster did direct before, and I am well informed, the hospital was in good order; suppose he was made director of the northern army, and his sub-directors were

Warren, M'Knight, and Potts, who are much thought of in the army, unless you make Dr. Jones of New York. director, and those three sub-directors, then the department will be complete. For the middle, I should like to continue if 'tis agreeable to Congress, and have for my sub-directors, Doctors Brown, Kuhn and Cochran. All the directors should be directed by Congress, to visit the hospital every two or three days; the southern department you know better than I do.

My dear Sir—General Greene is appointed to take the command of the southern army, and wishes to have your countenance and friendship. He is a little suspicious that you are not perfectly satisfied with his conduct, because you were said to be inimical to our commander, and of consequence to him, who was supposed to be one of his flatterers—this false idea I have reprobated, to General Greene, and assured him he would find you his friend and useful confidant. He is pleased with the idea, having a good and great idea of your integrity and ability; and I am pleased with an opportunity of assuring you the general is the fittest man in our army to retrieve our affairs in your country; he is a cool, brave, prudent, and thoughtful general, a staunch whig, and inflexible patriot, and, what I am sure will recommend him to you, he is my friend. I congratulate you on the success of our arms, against Major Ferguson, &c. and this will certainly give our southern friends fresh spirits, and who knows but it will be as fruitful in its consequences as the affair at Bennington. I give you joy also on the safe arrival of your two fine boys, and your brother Arthur. I left them all well, at my house, on Sunday last. The Congress seemed determined to give Mr. Lee all the trouble and vexation they can, influenced by that ..... The arrangement of the hospital department, is beyond conception, mean, unjust, and contemptible; and none of the officers, will, I believe, act under it. With difficulty, I am again elected director, such influence has Morgan's malicious insinuations had on the minds of six states, notwithstanding the acquittal by the court martial and Congress; however, I am now at liberty to continue or resign, and believe shall choose the latter, unless some very material alterations take place. Two or three thousand men have sailed from New York, for Cape Fear, or Virginia, it is supposed. Our campaign is near over, and nothing like to be done. Our situation is now alarming, and unless something deci-

sive and spirited is done, God help us. With sincere wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, my dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and humble servant,
W. SHIPPEN, Jr.

Camp Peakness, Oct. 27, 1780.

READING, November 5, 1777.

Dear Sir—Mr. Nourse enclosed to me, by order of the board of war, a copy of a charge, made to the board, by the president and council of this state, against the quartermaster general's department; in which charge, Mr. John Biddle, and Mr. Robert L. Hooper, are particularly mentioned as offenders. Agreeable to the orders of the board, I have called upon Colonel Hooper to justify his conduct as a deputy quartermaster general. The colonel will wait on the board for that purpose. From much experience, I declare, that Colonel Hooper is a most excellent officer, and to him, we are principally indebted for the removal and security of the stores from Philadelphia, and for the happy supplies of forage and teams, during the three last months of the campaign. Major Ayers, who was sent by General Washington to remove the public stores from Trenton, and Mr. Butler, who had the principal direction of the stores from Philadelphia to Trenton and Bristol, will give him reputable certificates of his activity in the service. Mr. John Biddle, who acted some weeks as an assistant commissary of forage, with much industry, and great utility to the public, resigned the office about three weeks past, being tired out with the clamours of his enemies.

I believe the most honourable president and council do not suspect me of disaffection to our most righteous cause. If they hold any suspicions of that kind, the scene has changed most wonderfully, as I perfectly recognize many of their special friends, in times of difficulty and danger, as disaffected, most pusillanimous scoundrels; whom no inducements, private or public, could call forth in defence of their country—I mean before the game was palpably our own, and the storm well nigh past and over. Forgive this apparent heat; I know *the men* well, and believe the complaint against my department is grounded solely on a suspected detestation, in some of my assistants, of *their* government, and their go-

verning abilities. I shall be happy to know the determination of Congress relative to my letters of resignation, to which I beg leave to adhere.

I am, dear Sir, with much respect and affection,
Your obedient servant,

J. MIFFLIN.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
in Congress, at Yorktown.

READING, 12th November, 1777.

Dear Sir—I return a thousand affectionate thanks for your kind attention to me, and in particular for your last proposition, which has given me an opportunity of proving my zeal for my country's welfare, to be as ardent as ever. It became impossible for me to act in my former line, and I would have served as a gallopen to any general officer rather than continue in a command which I could not execute in a way honourable to myself, or useful to the public. The salary annexed to my new appointment is ample; I do not want pay; I wish only to lend a hand to save my country. I have thought much of the paltry figure this state makes in the present hour, and think it is not too late to recover her usual activity, and to make her as useful to the general cause as she was last year. If Congress will but assist in calling forth the militia of this state as volunteers, and not under the law by distinct classes, much may be done. I have reason to believe, six thousand men might be induced to step forth for a coup de main in the same manner, and with the same success, with our brave and virtuous brethren of New England; there is but one obstacle. This scheme is offensive to the president and council of Pennsylvania, and will, probably, be discouraged by them, as it may be injurious to their plans of government. I would have proposed and undertaken it long ago, but was unwilling to give those gentlemen any cause of complaint. If it is begun in Congress, it will probably take effect, and I will say and do all I can to bring out my countrymen; and when out, I will take any command with them, even that of a sergeant or corporal. When Congress have made their arrangement of quartermaster general, so that I can leave this town, without injury to the service, I will wait on them for their orders.

I am, affectionately,

J. MIFFLIN.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
in Congress, at Yorktown.

PHILADELPHIA, April 15, 1780.

Sir—I am to acknowledge and thank you for your obliging favour of the 17th February, enclosing Mr. Lee's vindication, which has been published in our newspapers. To some collateral parts, there have been replies by Mr. Conyngham, and Mr. Joseph Wharton. The multitude and enormity of public abuses one would have thought should have excited general attention and alarm; but attempts to detect and prevent them have generally been retorted in such a manner, as almost to sanctify unfaithfulness and dishonesty. I cannot help considering it as one of the most unfavourable symptoms, that, while we are all complaining against abuses, as soon as the offender is selected, he finds friends and advocates even in the most respectable assemblies.

In the affairs of Mr. Deane, I fear we shall long feel the sad effects of procrastination and indecision. After the publication of the 5th December, America had a just claim upon that gentleman to prove his allegations, or take the shame which would have been his portion. It has been determined otherwise, and it is very probable we shall never know from public authority, whether Mr. Deane was a faithful servant to his country, or a defrauder and base calumniator. At this rate, innocence is no shield, nor honesty a . . . . . and I shall esteem him a bold man who will venture abroad, in a public character, under the auspices of Congress. Permit me now, sir, before I conclude, to turn your attention to the unhappy state of affairs between Pennsylvania and Virginia. We had flattered ourselves that our disputes of territory were happily adjusted, and mutual friendship and affection would have taken place of that distrust and jealousy which had long prevailed. But the measure of sending commissioners to sell and confirm the very lands ceded to Pennsylvania by the settlement of the line, and the contempt shown to Congress, as well as this state, have, I fear, made such impressions as will not easily be erased. When nations and states can adopt such pitiful and disingenuous policy, it becomes common cause to unite against them, and you well know the jealousy entertained of Virginia, forms an easy ground for this purpose. The advantage, also, taken of our vicinity to the common enemy, against whom our whole force is collected and pointed, must appear, to every generous mind, so irreconcilable to the common principles of gratitude and justice, that it cannot be supposed the present measures originate from the same spirits or counsels, which created and conducted this great contest with Britain. You may be

assured that Pennsylvania will resent it the moment she has her arms at liberty, and then Virginia will blush that she has verified the predictions of our enemies. A few designing and interested men, in the back country, are certainly practising upon their more honest and . . . . . or corruption has pervaded your councils in a greater degree than could have been supposed from the infancy of your government. Your influence may do much to retrieve this unhappy business, and never can be employed to a better purpose.

The ladies of my family thank you for your very polite attention, and join me in wishing your lady, family, and self, every possible happiness.

I am, Sir, with much esteem,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOSEPH REED.

Richard Henry Lee, Esquire.

PHILADELPHIA, March 25th, 1780.

Dear Sir—Your much esteemed favour, of the 15th of last month, with the extracts from your much injured brother's letter, to the President of Congress, and the copy of Doctor Berkenhout's letter to yourself, enclosed, came safe to hand. Next to the approbation of my own conscience, it has always been my wish to obtain that of the wise and good, and I confess I am happy in having yours. I flatter myself the time will shortly come, when the honest labourers in the cause of freedom and their country, will at least meet with the reward of being known; and when, also, the double dealing, artful pretenders will be discovered.

There has been a virtuous band in Congress from the beginning of the present contest, but they were never so few, or so much opposed, as just after you and your good brother left us. In the winter and spring of 1779, there was a cabal, whose views I could not fathom; there were some possessed of restless spirits, and who endeavoused to set member against member, and the Congress against the states, particularly Pennsylvania and those of New England, and and the states against Congress. Every artifice was used to instil prejudice, against all our foreign ministers and commissioners, particularly your *brothers*, (Dr. Arthur Lee and William Lee,) and I really believe, if I had not in April last, gone off the bench into Congress, in the face of a vote of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, that they would have been recalled without exception. My fears were, that at that criti-

cal period, when it had been propagated in Europe, and some uneasiness discovered on that score by the court of France, that we were listening to overtures from Great Britain, a change of men might have implied, a change of measures, and given some countenance to the report; and for this reason I thought it wrong to recall any gentleman in such a conjuncture. The vote was taken with respect to Dr. Franklin, and being determined in the negative, it was postponed as to the rest, until I was absent on the circuit. Places I saw were sought after by some, and vacancies were necessary for the purpose of obtaining them, but I could not think this was the only thing in contemplation; though I may have been mistaken, as harmony seemed to be restored in some measure, upon the appointment of Messers Jay and Carmichel. The death of Mr. Drayton, and the considerable change about that time of the members, several of them not having been re-elected, left us pretty quiet ever since, though prejudices still too much prevail. When I reflect on the assiduity, the zeal, the fidelity, the abilities and patriotism of Dr. A. Lee, I cannot help deploring his fate, and reprobating the ingratitude of Congress; but sir, it is with pleasure that I can assure you, that he has many unshaken friends still remaining in that body, who have never seen him, and who esteem him only for his public virtues. I profess myself one of these, and he has at least, my warmest thanks for his substantial services rendered to my country. I cannot think it any reflection on a gentleman's heart, that he has been mistaken in entertaining too good an opinion of another, nor am I at all surprised that even you, should have been led into an error with respect to Doctor Berkenhout, after perusing his letter, and knowing his insinuating address; but I shall say no more on this head, as I am really apologizing for myself. The deranged state of our finances has given us infinite trouble and concern; a new plan has been adopted which is published in the newspapers, to which I shall refer you. If it can be carried into execution it will be a great relief to us, and I see nothing else left, but for every whig to exert himself in its support. There is no great prospect of peace, though the late intelligence from Europe is otherwise favourable, I suspect that Mr. Temple, (who came over in 1778 with Doctor Berkenhout,) will shortly venture here again, with propositions, (perhaps secret,) to acknowledge the independence of the states, except South Carolina and Georgia, and that part of Massachusetts, formerly called the province of Maine, on conditions of our neutrality between Britain and Spain; he is to have power to call on two merchants in London, of his own

nomination, *ad libitum*. This is not mere conjecture or report; but it may not be attempted to be carried into execution, as I think upon the best reflection he must despair of success. Can they suppose that these states will be so perfidious to one another, or to the auxiliary of their ally, that they are so corrupt, so base? Can they be taught to believe, that a virtuous people can grow so extremely wicked, by a war of five years continuance? Nemo repente fit turpissimus.

I am, my dear sir, with the most perfect esteem, your most obedient humble servant.

THOMAS M'KEAN.

PHILADELPHIA, September 4th, 1781.

SIR—I had the pleasure of receiving your favour, of the 26th of last month, yesterday, and am very sorry for the distresses of Virginia, though the ardour and unanimity of the people promise, that they will not long continue. Long ere this I had flattered myself, that I should have heard of the Count de Grasse and Count de Barras, having entered the Chesapeake, with thirty four ships of the line, and several frigates, bomb ketches and other armed vessels. They sailed for that bay long ago, with a considerable body of land forces, and a company of sappers and miners, having every apparatus on board for attacking fortifications. This you may depend upon. General Washington, with the whole French army and a large detachment of Americans, are in full march for your relief: the last division passes through this city to day. Colonel Laurens, came to town yesterday from Boston, where he arrived, in the French frigate Resolution, accompanied with two others loaded with arms, ammunition and clothing, on the 25th of August; besides these important supplies, all for the United States, he has brought with him a large sum in specie, almost equal to our wishes. The court of France have really exerted themselves, far beyond any thing done heretofore, and have given full proof, how much they have our independence at heart. In a few weeks more, I trust I shall have it in my power to mention, additional evidences of their most faithful attachment. The king has written a very friendly letter to Congress, and presented their special minister Colonel Laurens, with an elegant gold box, having his picture in the lid, ornamented with diamonds, &c. nearly resembling one, you had the honour of receiving. On Saturday last, about one oclock P. M., Sir Samuel Hood,

with twenty-two ships of the line, was seen about twenty-five miles southward of Shrewsbury, steering to the southward; I suppose for Chesapeake. In all probability we shall soon hear of a sea engagement; we are at the eve of great events; may God grant them to be prosperous to us, and that they may terminate in securing to us, peace, liberty and safety.

I have the honour to be, sir, with the most respectful personal attachment,

Your most obedient humble servant.

THOMAS M'KEAN.

The Hon. ARTHUR LEE.

MARYLAND CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 30th, 1776.

My dear Sir—Your letter of the 14th instant followed me to this city; and your other favour of the 21st, was delivered by yesterday's post. I hurried to Congress to give my little assistance to the framing a confederacy and a plan for a foreign alliance; both of them subjects of the utmost importance, and which, in my judgment, demand immediate despatch. The confederacy has engaged our close attention for a week. Three great difficulties occur; representation, the mode of voting, and the claims to the south sea. The whole might, in my opinion, be settled, if candour, justice, and the real interests of America, were attended to. We do not all see the importance, nay, the necessity, of a confederacy. We shall remain weak, distracted, and divided in our councils; our strength will decrease; we shall be open to all the arts of the insidious court of Britain, and no foreign court will attend to our applications for assistance, before we are confederated. What contract will a foreign state make with us, when we cannot agree among ourselves? Our army at Ticonderoga, consists of six thousand men, of which three thousand are in the hospital, from the small-pox and other camp disorders. Our army at New York contains fourteen thousand, of which only ten thousand are effective. Our flying camp in the Jerseys, has but between three and four thousand troops. No news from General Washington. He writes, 27th, that eight sail, supposed to be part of Lord Howe's fleet, arrived at the Hook that day. I shall always be glad to hear from you, and am, with great esteem,

Your affectionate friend,

And obedient servant,

SAMUEL CHASE.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

Extract of a letter from

PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 11 o'clock, A. M.

The enclosed copy of General Washington's letter of the 28th, will inform you of the transactions in the Jerseys, since my last to you. We do not exactly know the enemy's strength in the Jerseys. They have called in all their outposts, and have left but weak garrisons in New York and Long Island. I apprehend Howe may have in all about fifteen thousand; but these will moulder away by daily skirmishes, desertion, and fatigue, unless he can force our general to a battle, and should come off conqueror. I fear the loss of our three field pieces was owing to surprise. Was it not shameful to be surprised, when the enemy were within eight miles? Nothing but severity will introduce discipline into our armies; and dear bought experience only can convince our officers and men of its utility, nay, of its absolute necessity. Mr. Duet, a delegate from New York, informs me, that an intelligent person who arrived yesterday in town from Poalskill, acquainted him, that the obstructions in the Highlands are in great forwardness; and that the enemy, should they attempt that passage, will meet with a most vigorous resistance. I wish our situation at Ticonderoga may be as respectable. I expect great matters from the influence, conduct, and activity of Schuyler, and from the military knowledge of St. Clair, who commands at that post. Four French engineers arrived here last week, engaged by our agents in France, by the direction of Congress. They refuse to serve under De Coudray. The terms on which these gentlemen engaged, are modest and moderate; a lieutenant colonel in the French service is to be a colonel in our's, a major a lieutenant colonel, and a lieutenant a captain.

Extract of a letter from

PHILADELPHIA, half after 12 o'clock, July 1st, 1777.

By a letter from General Washington, dated the 29th, and just now received in Congress, we are informed that the

enemy have all returned again to Amboy: and, from appearances, are preparing for a general embarkation. The general enclosed a letter from Lord Sterling, which mentions several circumstances, inducing him to think the enemy, in the late skirmish, lost a general officer, and that Lord Howe's son was dangerously wounded. We took thirteen prisoners, and have lost about as many, with three field pieces.

ANNAPOLIS, November 28th, 1777.

My dear Sir—I am under infinite obligations to you, for communicating the very important intelligence received from Europe. I always esteemed it the real interest of France and Spain to assist us; and, if necessary, to join in a war to humble the insolence and pride of Britain. I wish, most cordially wish, to see that proud, wicked, and tyrannical nation reduced to beg terms of peace from her ancient and inveterate enemy. Do you believe that the British commissioners authorized Brown to inform Congress, that they would treat with Congress, as such; and, as a preliminary, would withdraw their troops, and grant the terms of 1763, and more, or that they have any powers to treat on any terms?

I heartily approve the conduct of Congress. I am informed from Albany, that during the convention, the military chest was divided among the generals and officers, after paying the troops, and the arms and the stores destroyed. Is a convention binding under such circumstances? I beg leave to suggest to your consideration, the propriety of Congress recommending to the states to make continental loan office certificates a tender in all cases; by this measure, you will compel the *tories* to lend to the continent. *E. g.* A, a whig, owes B, a tory; if A pay B in money, B will not lend to Congress, but will either lend to private persons, or speculate. A may force him against his will, by paying his money into the treasury, and giving him a loan office certificate. I wish you all health and happiness.

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

SAMUEL CHASE.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
in Congress, Yorktown.

BALTIMORE, July 2d, 1789.

My dear Sir—As the time approaches for the appointment to office, the anxiety of the applicants increases. Mr. Harness is alarmed from the number of applicants; and he is told that the president will only nominate *one* person to each office. The choice of the Senate will be great, and useful to the public if this mode be pursued! They will have a *negative*, if the president should again nominate the same person, and persist; the office must be vacant, or his nomination accepted. I remember it was held a maxim in British politics, that all acts of bounty should flow from the king alone—all refusals from his ministers. I hope this information is not true.

I sometimes see debates in the lower house of Parliament, but none in the *Senate*. I hear their doors are locked; if true, I am sorry for it. I retain my republican principles, although our government, and the principles of the people, are changed, and are monarchical. I approve of the amendments of the Senate to the impost bill: the duties are yet too high, and experience will prove it. I think the subject of the bill ought to have been divided: duties for *revenue;* duties for the regulation of trade; and duties to encourage manufactures, if you have any power by the constitution to impose taxes or duties for these purposes. I perceive by the bill for the establishment of the judicial courts, that the jury trial is secured. If the jury trial depends on a *law*, I suppose it may be modified, or *taken away* by another *law*. I think the bill is ably drawn. I think there are some defects. The circuit courts ought not to have jurisdiction of cases under eight hundred dollars. The district court ought to have jurisdiction of juries to amount of eight hundred dollars. The *same* persons ought, on no account, to be judges of law and *equity*. The restriction on the jurisdiction of the courts of equity will render the court useless in a thousand instances, in which it ought to have jurisdiction. It is difficult to define its jurisdiction. but the limitation will do great injury. I have written my idea of a proper clause, pointing out in what cases the equity courts shall have jurisdiction, to Mr. Housy. I consider the district court as the most useful and important; the superior court as the most honourable and profitable. If it is intended to give the district judge jurisdiction of . . . . in time of war, his office will be very important, and will require considerable abilities, as well as great integrity. I say if *intended*, because it is omitted. Whatever I scribble

now, or at any time, is only for your private observation. If I notice any thing to you, it is without the least intention of giving offence to any one. If my opinion could prevail, I would . . . . allowance to the . . . . . I have not heard one person approve. It is flinging the government into the hands of the wealthy or adventurous. Adieu, my dear sir; accept my best wishes for your health and prosperity; think of my friend Harness, and believe me to be, at all times,

Your affectionate friend,

And obedient servant,

SAMUEL CHASE.

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Sir—In return for your kindness in sending the two Maryland acts, imposing taxes by assessment, I am sorry that I cannot furnish you with an authentic copy of the charter granted by King James. The papers belonging to the House of Delegates, among which that grant is, were long since sent to Richmond; and I do not believe the person in whose care they are, can readily find it. Before you reached Philadelphia, or soon afterwards, you probably heard of the arrival of a British fleet in the Chesapeake. Whilst it was in suspense, whether their destination was for Virginia, government was making some preparations for its defence; if they had made a descent here, how inadequate the forces that could have been drawn together would have been, I need not explain to you. They however soon disappeared. It is supposed that they are bound to the head of the bay; and that the troops on board will march towards Philadelphia: if they should take that route, and General Washington had left the city, as we are informed he did the 10th instant, some of us fear it may be attended with bad effects, unless he can return time enough to obstruct the progress of the enemy. Several of the Gloucester men from the lower part of the county, even of those who were assembled upon this occasion, refused to take the oath of fidelity: Mr. Camen and our countryman Mr. Hubard, of this city, declined it, alleging that they desired time to consider of it: I have heard too, that many in another county, are very scrupulous on this head. It is pity we cannot act with more unanimity and more vigour: nothing else seems wanting to conclude this contest happily and speedily; an event which I despair not of, nor would despair of, if all the tories, ... patriots, and trimming neuters were at Howe's head-quarters. It appears to me, whatever may be achieved by the enemy, or however they may be disappointed in this expedition, that the earliest intelligence of their operations ought to be dispersed. No doubt our delegates, in their ordinary correspondence with government, will be

as communicative as can be reasonably wished, yet particular information from you, sir, will be esteemed a favour. Present my compliments, if you please, to your brother, and believe me to be your friend.

GEORGE WYTHE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 24th August, 1777.

Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 18th October, ——.

Well I know, sir, how much of your time is taken up in the important duties of your station, nor do I wish to interrupt you, even so long, as it would require, to answer a letter from me, unless you think you cannot be better employed. This I write chiefly to remind you, how acceptable a line from you will be: and further, that I would very gladly be acquainted with your sentiments upon taxation, a topic which we expect at the approaching session will be copiously discussed. When you were so obliging as to send me the Maryland act, you had not considered it, perhaps you may have since had leisure to do so, and if you have, I need not tell you, what advantage may be derived from your observations. I am, dear sir, your obedient,

GEORGE WYTHE.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Member of the Continental Congress, now at York, Pennsylvania.

DEAR SIR—The letter concerning the leases was mentioned in the House, but so slighted, and treated in such a manner, that I had not occasion to acquaint the House with what you had written to me upon that subject. I had hopes, when I received your last obliging letter, that Sir William Howe would before this time have been driven out of Philadelphia, but it seems he remains there still; perhaps he will not find it an eligible station, nor think it worth holding, if our garrison at Mud Island Fort, which I think have done meritorious service, can be supported so as to keep his brother, in the British fleet, below the Chevaux de Frise. Our Assembly have entered on the consideration of taxes, which every one appears to concur in imposing, but have not made any great progress in it. Bills are ordered to be brought in for establishing the courts of justice, and one of them, I expect, will be presented to day. We were all very happy for a time, by

the report of General Burgoyne's surrender, but some begin to doubt the truth of it, because, as it is said, no letters in confirmation of it, have been received from the victorious Gates. Be so kind as to put an end to our suspense so soon as may be. The British ships of war are yet in the waters of the Chesapeake. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WYTHE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 6th November, 1777.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
one of the Delegates in Congress,
for Virginia.

WILLIAMSBURG, August 1, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I find I am in your debt for interesting intelligence, and feel myself able to discharge it no otherwise than by thanking you; for I hear nothing in this quarter lately, worth communicating; I say discharge, for an ethic writer, of the first class, hath taught me, that *gratiam et qui retulit habet, et qui habet dissolvit.* By another way, however, I may be even with you. The pleasure you will be sensible of when I tell you, that letters from you at all times augment my happiness, must remunerate you for the trouble it costs you to write them. This consideration encourages me to hope for the continuance of a correspondence, valuable, I know, to one, and not otherwise, I flatter myself, to the other. Shall I put the papers in the suit brought in the name of Mr. Gaskins, against Mr. Pinckard, into the hands of our attorney general? I have better reasons for recommending him than that I have a kindness for him. Present my compliments to your brother, and my other countrymen, and be assured that I am your friend,

GEORGE WYTHE.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE,
Member of Congress, for Virginia, Philadelphia.

WILLIAMSBURG, June 5, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I am now to acknowledge the receipt of two of your favours, during the session of Assembly, but there being little to communicate to you, and that, being a busy

time with me, has prevented my doing it sooner. The Assembly rose on Monday last; their only act, which can shortly aid our army, was one for raising a regiment of horse, which, I think, will be raised as fast as it can be accoutred. Another act they passed, will, also, produce aid to our army, I hope, but it will be some time first; it was for giving great encouragement to soldiers, and appointing recruiting officers all over the country, to attend all public places. By a third act, they foolishly repeated the experiment of raising volunteers; the first attempt was pardonable, because its ill success could not be foreseen; the second is worse than ridiculous, because it may deceive our friends; I am satisfied there will not be a company raised. I wish Congress would commute a good part of the infantry required from us, for an equivalent force in horse. This service opens to us a new fund of young men, who have not yet stepped forth; I mean those whose indolence or education, has unfitted them for foot-service; this may be worth your thinking of. We passed the bill of pardon, recommended by Congress, but the Senate rejected it. Your letter, about enlarging your powers over the confederation, was not proceeded on, because the nature of the enlargement was not chalked out by you so intelligibly as enabled the house to do any thing, unless they had given a *carte blanche*. Indeed, I believe, that, had the alterations proposed been specified, unless they had been mere form indeed, it might have been difficult to obtain their consent. A Frenchman arrived here a week ago, with a vast cargo of woollens, made and unmade, stockings, shoes, &c. fit for the army, fifty-thousand weight of powder, and other articles; the master had once sold the whole cargo, to the governor and council, for 5*s*. 3*d*. the livre, first cost; but, on suggestions from some of our forestallers, and those from Maryland, he flew off. Our bay is clear of the enemy. Nothing new here. I set out for Albemarle, within a day or two. Mr. Harvie will be with you in about three weeks. My compliments to your brethren of the delegation, and am, dear sir,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esquire,
Of the Virginia Delegation,
Yorktown.

WILLIAMSBURG, June 17, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I received your letter, and kind congratulations, for which I return you my thanks. In a virtuous government, and more especially in times like these, public offices are, what they should be, burthens to those appointed to them, which it would be wrong to decline, though foreseen to bring with them intense labour, and great private loss. I am, also, still to thank you for a former favour, enclosing a song and receipt. We have little new here. Colonel Clarke's expedition against St. Vincents, you know of; his prisoners are arrived at Chesterfield, and three of them brought to this place, to be severely dealt with; the enclosed paper will explain that matter. We have 300 men, under Colonel Bowman, in the Shawanee country, of whom we hope to receive good accounts; the destruction of the villages of the Cherokees, at Chuchamogga, and taking their goods. &c. has brought them to sue for peace; but the happiest stroke was the burning twenty-thousand bushels of corn, collected there for the use of the expeditions, which were to have been adopted at the great council. Governor Hamilton had called at the mouth of the Tanissee, as mentioned in the within paper. It is a cruel thought, that, when we feel ourselves standing on the firmest ground, in every respect, the cursed arts of our secret enemies, combining with other causes, should effect, by depreciating our money, what the open arms of a powerful enemy could not. What is to be done? Taxation is become of no account, for it is foreseen, that, notwithstanding its increased amount, there will still be a greater deficiency than ever. I own I see no assured hope, but in peace, or a plentiful loan of hard money.

I shall be obliged by your letters, when convenient to you to write. I never was a punctual correspondent to any person, as I must own to my shame; perhaps my present office will put it more out of my power; however, as it may sometimes furnish me with matter which may induce me to hope my letters may be worth sending, I may venture to say, you shall hear from me whenever I can get over the two-fold difficulty of many letters of absolute necessity to write, and an innate aversion to that kind of business.

I am, dear sir,
Your friend and servant,
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
Westmoreland.

IN COUNCIL, March 10, 1781.

SIR—At the request of Major General Baron Steuben, expressed in the enclosed letter, I take the liberty of laying it before you. The number of militia necessary to be called into the field, and time of their being there, we begged the baron to advise. He did so. Apprehending deficiencies, we ordered a considerably larger number. As soon as we received the letters informing us of the deficiencies from New Kent, and desertions from Cabin Point, finding, that, with those of Loudoun, the number would be reduced below what he desired, we ordered three hundred and fifty-one from the counties of Chesterfield and Dinwiddie. The time fixed by the baron, for the first reenforcement, was the 6th instant; our orders were that they should be there on the 5th or 6th, at furthest; they were not there, it seems, on the 7th. A number of horses were required for special purposes; we furnished the quartermaster with impressing powers. He applied for militia to aid him in the execution of the powers. We knew that an armed force to impress horses was as unnecessary as it was new. The fact has been, that our citizens, so far from requiring an armed force for this purpose, have parted with their horses too easily, by delivering them to every man who said he was riding on public business, and assumed a right of impressing. When, therefore, the militia have on their hands a sufficiency of real calls to duty, we did not think proper to harass them in cases where, we had reason to believe, they were not wished by the quartermaster as militia, but as servants. It was mentioned to the quartermaster, that, in our opinion, he could and should do but little in this neighbourhood, and that of Petersburg, which had been drained by constant impresses; nevertheless, we furnished him with blank powers, to be exercised where he pleased.

I have the honour to be,
With very great respect, sir,
Your most ob't and most humble serv't.
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, October 15, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I have by express, your obliging favour of the 5th; we were in some sort, prepared for the disagreeable intelligence of the small hopes of an accommodation, by reports and papers here intimating the same thing. Colonel Corbin has a letter from a hand, connected in some manner with Admon, that the plan was to withdraw all troops, and send men of war and cutters, to put a stop to all foreign trade, and that with each other, and so starve us into submission. If this is the case, perhaps Shuldham may not bring troops. Our affairs may perhaps take another turn, when the Congress petition and the Virginia representation against Lord Dunmore, reaches the people there. These furious measures seem to have been suddenly adopted on the arrival of Lady Dunmore, no doubt with cargoes of aggravating letters and misrepresentations from our hero, and just after some fears of Admon respecting the Spaniards, were quieted by their loss among the Algerines; whatever be our state, I hope we shall meet it with fortitude. Had we arms and ammunition, it would give vigour to our measures. We hourly hoped to hear of the arrival of the necessaries, but now fear we shall be defeated. A villain has given Lord Dunmore information of it, and he has six or seven tenders plying out for it about the capes. What can such a parricide deserve? We have been sitting a month, and yet see no hopes of a recess; we are thin, and some present unwell. Colonel Thomas is among the healthy. Nine companies of regulars are here, and seem very clever men; others we hear are ready, and only wait to collect arms. Lord Dunmore's forces are only one hundred and sixty as yet, entrenched at Gosport, and supported by the ships drawn up before that and Norfolk. I have heard of no attempt of his since seizing the printer, and a ship with flour, from Baltimore, except sending a party to Sleepy Hole, in pursuit of some powder we had there, which he missed about three hours. Most of the inhabitants of Norfolk, except tories, have moved out their families and valuable effects. Lord Dunmore, it is said, is much afraid of the riflemen, and has all his vessels caulked up on the sides, above men's height, however, they may perhaps pay him a visit, ere long. The good news relative to General Schuyler, came as a reviving cordial after the other; nothing has yet happened more important in my opinion, than this event, if completed, as I hope it is before now.

Pray present my affectionate compliments to your worthy brethren and the ladies.

I am, with great regard,
Your affectionate and obedient servant,
EDMD. PENDLETON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq. of Virginia,
now at Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, April 8, 1776.

Dear Sir—On Friday last, General Lee arrived safe in Williamsburg, in a very rainy day, and much fatigued; we considered him as a valuable acquisition, and esteem it a favour in Congress to spare him to this department, where, most people here think, the gentry who found Boston too hot for them, will come, and be joined by the much talked of powerful force from Europe. However, I am not of that opinion, and think they either mean a descent upon some other part of New England they like better, or, perhaps, by dividing our army, may purpose to return to Boston with greater advantage, or else to go to Halifax, and wait for the season to go up to Quebec. General Lee thinks if they come here, they will certainly make Williamsburg their object, and on that supposition is going to entrench it. I hear since I came away, he has ordered all the battalions from their stations to that place, which has made the people in town very happy, but I fear will be very alarming to other parts, particularly the Northern Neck, who were before uneasy, on the appearance of tenders in Potomac and Rappahannoc. It was mentioned in committee before I came away, it would be proper to request our delegates to transmit all public proceedings of Congress, to be laid before convention at their meeting; they will probably have wrote on the subject, but I mention it least they should from hurry overlook it. I have seen your resolves about reprisals. Is it considered as a law we are now to execute by granting commissions? or must we wait for a confirmation by our convention? Elections are coming on; it seems Colonel Francis and Mr. Carter, are left out, by the bulk of the freeholders being absent, not expecting a contest.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
EDMD. PENDLETON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
at Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, Sept. 13, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Since your first letter gave me notice of your return to Philadelphia, I have not missed a post paying you my respects, till the last, when I happened to be much engaged. I thank you for your favour of the 2d, which enclosed a handbill of General Arnold's having compelled the enemy to raise the siege of fort Schuyler in so precipitate a manner, as to give us some valuable things; I hope the web is made so strong for him as, ere this, to make him the *governed* in some strong hold of ours, instead of *Governor of Fort William in North Britain*. The instance mentioned by General Gates, of his having paid for the scalps of innocent helpless people, is shocking to humanity, not to say, Christianity, and proves that English bravery has fled with it, and we shall that way derive advantages equal to the sufferings of our poor country women and children. It would seem as if a battle on Delaware was now unavoidable, and I shall daily expect to hear of it. From all accounts we have, our army are healthy, in spirits, and well supplied, and with the militia are greatly superior to the enemy. Our cause is just, as we are only defending our lives and properties, the gift of God, against the most cruel invaders; and therefore, I think we may with confidence, hope for the divine assistance. I have just heard from Williamsburg, that the Caroline troop of horse had marched to Portsmouth, but not the occasion, perhaps we may hear by post. I wish the enemy's ships had shared the same fate as their houses, that they might, deprived of those canvass wings, have no better means of moving than we have.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
in Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, October 11, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of September 16th, reached me yesterday, and that of the 1st instant, this morning. I had before received a very succinct account of the ..... victory we had complimented General Howe with, and every letter from Congress and the army conveyed the pleasing news that our army were on their march to a new rencounter with redoubled ardour and spirits; judge then sir, of my feelings,

when I was a fortnight in suspense for any certain intelligence, but yet almost every day teased with loose reports that Howe had passed Washington, and got into Philadelphia without firing a gun. The various causes assigned for it, rather increased than lessened the wonder, and I buffeted the fact wherever I met the story; your last favour clears up the perplexity, and assigns a very satisfactory cause for the retreat of our army. I am perfectly resigned to the providential interposition at the moment hostilities were begun, and by the same overruling hand, it may be that our purpose is another ..... effected without the effusion of blood, which would probably have then followed. We are now told that General Putnam possesses Philadelphia, with a strong body, and Howe encamped at the Chesnut Hills, seven miles off, with General Washington seven miles behind him; however this be, if we can keep the ships below the fort, the city cannot be eligible quarters for him long, and the ships will only serve to cover his retreat and embarkation for some other place; if that should be Virginia, and our army can give them another victory, or two, such as the former, before they come off; I think General Nelson with our militia, will give a good account of the rest. The state of our affairs in the north is pleasing, and by divine assistance, promises us the most important, beneficial consequences from a very unpromising root, the former surrender of Ticonderoga. The check given to Burgoyne's army, his wound, and the loss of so many men, must dispirit them and animate our people, who should however prepare for a most desperate defence from soldiers whose retreat is cut off, and will not soon agree to surrender. I am glad Congress have found a Mount Arrarat, and hope the communication between them and the southward, will now be open and regular. I have continued to write by every post, but uncertain whether they have reached you, as I was informed no northern rider came to Fredericksburg.

The crisis is important, may wisdom guide and union attend your councils, and may the God of battles strengthen the nerves of the soldiery, and enable them to crush tyranny, and establish peace and security for America.

Dear sir, affectionately yours,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq., at Congress, York.

EDMONSBURG, February 28th, 1785.

DEAR SIR—I have not been favoured with any letter from you since December 19th, nor do I expect another until after you shall have received mine; accepting of your kind offer of reviving a former correspondence. I have nothing worth communicating of foreign or domestic intelligence, and therefore it shall be the purpose of this, to make a few observations on some of our late laws. You'll have been informed, that an act has passed for incorporating the Episcopal church, the minister (where there is one) and vestry, are made the corporation in each parish, with power to take care of the property, and to elect a layman, to accompany the priest to the convention, where rulers are to be formed for the government of the church, and providing for a succession in the ministry. The vestries, as many of them are said not to be of that church, are all dissolved, and a new election is to be made on Easter Monday, by the members of the church only; their power, I am told, is confined to the affairs of the church, and that there are to be overseers of the poor in each parish, elected by the people at large, to make the right of representation as extensive as the power of taxation, and to avoid all suspicion of partiality in the assembly, to that church. The act was preceeded by a resolution that they would pass laws for incorporating any society of Christians, who should desire it. I am not able to discover in this law, any thing which can justly alarm any other society, no more than in another bill, (which is put off till the next session) for a general assessment to support religious teachers, with a right of appropriation in the prayer; yet in both some very sagacious gentlemen, can spy designs to revive the former establishment, which I believe, do not exist in the minds of any member of that church, the clergy and a few monarchy men excepted. A recommendation has gone forth to elect members to meet in convention at Richmond, in May, when, I am told, the clergy mean to recommend the plan adopted in New York, as the ground of proceeding; and so much for these laws.

An assize law hath at length passed, but its operation suspended, till the first of January next, I suppose with the intention to collect the sense of the country, upon its propriety and utility in general, as well as upon the particular plan of it, and give an opportunity of repealing or altering it, before it had begun to operate; a deep reflection on the subject, has long convinced me, that this measure is unexceptionable, and absolutely necessary for the speedy and easy administration

of justice in this extensive country. But, whether we are arrived at the period proper for its adoption, depends upon many circumstances too delicate for me to mention, especially as the decision depends on others and not on me; with them therefore I leave it. The sheriffs complain of great difficulty in the collection of taxes; which, I believe, proceeds from a struggle between the merchants and planters, to *lessen* and *keep* up the price of tobacco. Why the assembly did not continue to receive commodities, I know not, but am persuaded they have injured both the people and the revenue by the measure. Adieu for the present. Dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
in New York.

EDMONSBURG, March the 7th, 1785.

Dear Sir—Post day has again arrived without my having received a letter from you, or acquired any intelligence worth communicating. The continental storm having blown over, the systems of the courts of London and Madrid, may possibly change, particularly the latter, who can promise itself very little countenanue (in shutting up the navigation of the Mississippi from so great a number of its settlers, against natural right, and a fair construction of treaties,) from those powers, who have in their mediation, compelled the opening of the Scheldt, against explicit and repeated treaties. The precedent is strong, and applies a *fortiori*.

People here are sitting in judgment upon a late vote in Congress, appropriating a sum of money towards raising a new city for their residence. They call in question the *power* of Congress, to put their hand into the public purse for this purpose; and, admitting the power, arraign their *prudence* in the exercise of it, at a time, when our faith in the discharge of former engagements, calls for the utmost exertions of our abilities in finance, and perhaps requires more than can be complied with, without a degree of distress which endangers our infant government. Pray enable me, to advocate Congress on these heads, which at present I feel myself unequal to. You'll have heard, that the act providing for the payment of British debts, was one of two that was left unsigned by the speaker of the Delegates, for want of an House at the close of the session. I suppose it will be thought in Britain, that this was a contrivance to suspend the operation of the

remedy, inadequate as they may deem it; indeed we are told, that the North British merchants have applied to their ministry to enforce this part of their treaty. In the mean time, the learned in the law are divided here, on a question whether the act, having passed both branches of the legislature, is not in force, though it wants the signature of one of the speakers. I wish no parts of the law were subject to more important consequences, than the decision of that question. I am, with great regard, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
New York.

EDMONSBURG, Virginia, April 18th, 1785.

Dear Sir—An indisposition has prevented my paying you my respects for some weeks past, and am yet very feeble; however, I have taken up the pen, to thank you for your very obliging favours of the 17th and 26th of March. I am truly sensible of the almost unremitted demands of office upon your time, (and concerned to find that ill health is superadded. which, I hope, the approaching warm season, salutary to age, will remove) and whilst I acknowledge how much the value of a letter is increased by that circumstance, I am to entreat, you will not let your politeness interfere with business or health; I will be thankful for a letter when a leisure moment turns up, and you are quite at ease.

I think the slow movements of the emperor towards the field, strongly indicates his intention to make an amicable end of the dispute; and "true it is 'tis pity, but pity it is 'tis true," that he will probably in yielding, lose much *political* character in Europe; for to a philosophic mind it would appear more reasonable to yield a small claim, however just in itself and useful to a few of his citizens, and wait for some more convenient season for attaining it, than precipitately to involve his country and perhaps all Europe in a war, in the event of which, nothing would be certain, except the loss of much blood and treasure. Spain has probably hostile intentions, but if it be true, that she has begun by a squabble with Britain about the Musquito shore, and South Americans are in ill humour with her government, she may find her hands full of employment without disturbing us. I am glad to hear, that the European powers lend an attentive ear to

propositions for treaties of *commerce*, a subject more sonorous to an American, than *war*. I can't help thinking, that the British court are right, in having all propositions between them and us, agitated either in London or America; indeed during the war, and in the treaties for putting an end to it, Paris was very properly fixed on as the rendevouz of the plenipotentiaries, but in peace the case is altered, and we have only to take care that we enter into no engagements inconsistent with good faith to France, and satisfy that court of it, by communicating what is done, as becomes friends. I hope Mr. Adams will find the court of London sincere in her professions on this subject. Noise and dissipation, are stated enemies to wisdom and deliberation, in public councils in their neighbourhoods, and I should think that consideration alone, a sufficient reason for the determination of Congress to found a new city for their session, if they could there be secure of the wished for retirement; but I fear they will carry with them, the seeds of those evils wherever they go: pardon me sir, I don't mean in their conduct or dispositions, but considering them as the American court, the residence of foreign ministers and their suites, as well as the rendevouz of foreign travellers of distinction. I fear that virtue and quiet will be short lived in your new city.

I am happy to find that your sentiments accord with mine, on the subject of a general assessment, as I know they formerly did on that of circuit courts. I hear there are considerable clamours against both, and cannot foresee, what will probably be the decision of the next assembly upon either; but as your reasoning on both, though short, is very forcible, I know I shall have your pardon for publishing that as an extract, as it may be useful to the members, who I fear will need it, as I can truly say, that I have heard of but one elected, who is acquainted with business, and he not a very industrious one. I shall never publish any intelligence, which may be supposed to come to you from our ministers abroad, without particular permission.

There seems to be an untoward fate attending the impost, that when Rhode Island had just come into the measure, an opposition should be found in the senate of New York; and so I suppose they will throw in the black ball, one after another, and always defeat it.

Governor Harrison has lost his election in Charles City, which he imputes, I hear, to the intrigues of his old friend the speaker, and is, as usual, very angry, that he should meet with this reward from the people, for thirty-six years faithful

service. I am, with my best wishes for your health, and every sentiment of esteem and regard, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.,
New York.

WILLIAMSBURG, February 20th, 1776.

Dear Sir—I have just received yours of the 15th instant, and have snatched a moment to write a few lines in answer to it. I approve much of your plan of publishing the hand-bill, and would, before this, have executed it, if my indisposition and Mrs. Page's illness, added to an incessant round of business, had not prevented me.

The method you mention for removing the spikes from cannon, is certainly good; but it is said the cannon at Norfolk are rendered useless, by being broken at their trunnions and buts. I will endeavour, sir, to prevail on our committee to send you regularly authentic accounts of every material occurrence here, and of the state of the enemy's strength. I wrote you yesterday an account of the arrival of another man of war, and a transport or two; this report has not been contradicted, nor have we yet heard from whence or what these ships are. Captain Hammond of the Robuck, we are well assured, has behaved with great politeness and humanity to several of our people. Lord Dunmore had written a letter to Colonel Corbin, in which he offers to go to England to negotiate peace; he professes the warmest attachment to this country, and says that he lays hold on the last sentence in the king's speech, to offer his services to procure a lasting, speedy, and honourable accommodation. No one, but Lord Dunmore, could have applied that sentence in the manner he has. I will send you a copy of the letter by the post. Colonel Corbin laid the letter before the committee of safety, and received a letter from the committee, which I will also send you. In it we told the colonel, that we were neither empowered nor inclined to intermeddle with the mode of negotiation; that we looked to the Congress for the management of this important matter; but added, we would lay his letter before the assembly, which is to meet on their adjournment, and that Lord Dunmore might manifest his good intentions by suspending hostilities. Colonel Corbin set out this morning to Hampton, with orders to Colonel Grayson to send him with a flag of truce to Lord Dunmore. We gave him to un-

derstand, that his lordship should deliver up the slaves now with him immediately. The old gentleman went off in great hopes of procuring a month's truce at least, and seemed determined to give Captain Hammond a true statement of Lord Dunmore's conduct. Since writing my letter of yesterday, the committee have ordered down the saltpetre which had been sent to Petersburg, to be worked up by Buckstrout. I hope from this that they will at length encourage him, and enable him to carry on the manufacturing of gunpowder to a considerable extent. The report of the burning of Portsmouth was entirely without foundation.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant,

JOHN PAGE.

P. S. I think you had better attend the Assembly. You will be more wanted here than at the Congress.

J. P.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
of Chantilly.

WILLIAMSBURG, July 10th, 1778.

Dear Sir—I was not at home when the post brought your letter, and therefore could not acknowledge the receipt of it by its return; but snatch a moment by the return of this week's post, to thank you for your letter and paper enclosed. I am highly pleased with the answer of Congress to the British commissioners; it was a glorious contrast to their proposals. I heartily congratulate you on the retreat of the British army from Philadelphia, and on your return to that city, and hope shortly to have the pleasure to congratulate you on their total defeat, or capitulation at least. The sooner we can be informed of the defeat or escape of the enemy, the better; because I should think, in either case, we might lay aside the extravagant scheme of the volunteer horse and foot. I wrote a few lines yesterday to your brother, the doctor, in France, enclosing him the latest Pennsylvania papers, and the hand-bill giving an account of the flight and defeat of the British army, and sent my letter by a vessel which set sail in two or three days. The governor sent, by the same opportunity, some letters and despatches, I believe from Congress.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant,

JOHN PAGE.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
A Delegate in Congress, at Philadelphia.

WILLIAMSBURG, October 15th, 1778.

Dear Sir—I this moment received your letter of the first instant, enclosing the vote of Congress respecting the cannon in North Carolina. The board have not yet had leisure to consider whether they will accept of them on the terms proposed or not. I have just received a letter from Dr. Lee, informing me that he expected to procure the cannon and other military stores, which our board had written to Mr. William Lee to purchase for this state. The letter is of an old date, May the 27th, 1778, and therefore contains no news; but the doctor says he had been informed, that the British army was to be withdrawn, leaving a strong garrison at Halifax; and that the fleet was to exert its whole force in annoying our coasts, and cutting off our trade—by this means endeavouring to worry us into a compliance with the commissioners' propositions. I congratulate you on the success of the French fleet on the English coast. This, with the news of the loss of Dominica, and the frigates in the West Indies, and those at Rhode Island, added to the severe check their naval force has received in America, and the defeat of their army in two battles, must give a shock to the British ministry that I think they will not be able to withstand. The minority must gain strength every day; and I should even suppose that the militia, having arms in their hands, may feel themselves of importance enough to begin to think and judge for themselves; and if so, there must be at least a change of ministers and measures. The independence of America, and peace with France, may be the consequence of this—an event truly desirable; but I confess that I am almost afraid of making peace with England, before the deep rooted prejudices of some of our countrymen in favour of that artful people, are eradicated—or at least before we can conquer the aversion too many Americans have conceived against the French. I really am apprehensive, if a peace were shortly to take place, that the English would again engross nearly the whole trade of America, ingratiate themselves so with us, as almost to wheedle us into some connexions with them, which might prove fatal to our liberties, especially after they had sufficiently undermined the French interest in America, and had worked their court up to a proper pitch of jealousy and resentment; so that, though I ardently wish for peace, yet I am almost afraid of its consequences. I fear we have not wisdom and virtue enough to conduct ourselves properly in such a trying situation—when that luxury, avarice, and indolence, which we see already possessing so many Ameri-

can breasts, to the utter exclusion of every virtuous sentiment or feeling for their country, may be so much more completely indulged and gratified: and yet, such is our unhappy situation, from a thousand concurring circumstances, that I dread the consequences of another campaign. Should the French fleet be obliged to leave us for want of proper supplies, or be called off to the West Indies or to Europe, and should the enemy, discovering the difficulties we shall be under of supplying our army with provisions, resolve not to quit New York and Rhode Island; I fear we shall want more virtue to support us, than could be easily found on such an emergency. But heaven forbid that we should have any such occasion for such exertions of virtue. Adieu, my dear sir, and believe me to be, yours,

JOHN PAGE.

P. S. Since writing the within, the board have directed the agent for the state to pay for the cannon immediately, should they be approved of by the officer sent to receive them. I have enclosed you a copy of the paper you sent me, and which you received from the commercial committee, to show you that they have committed an error somewhere in their state of the account. J. P.

My dear Sir—Since your letter of the 1st of September, we have heard nothing with certainty respecting the northern army, and but little from that under General Washington. I fear the post must have fallen into Mr. Howe's hands, for we have seen nothing of him these two weeks past; we had a report yesterday, that Burgoyne, with his whole army, was totally defeated. I should be happy to hear it confirmed, but fear there is no truth in it, as no mention is made of the time or place, in which it happened, or by whom the victory was obtained. I shall be glad to be informed of the particulars of the action of the 11th, and where General Washington is at present. Has Congress moved from Philadelphia, or do you intend to stay and act like the Roman senators, who offered their throats to the Gauls to be cut? I was, the other day, in Williamsburg, where the people appeared to be just composing themselves after the fright which they were thrown into by the appearance of the fleet in our bay. The

militia, which was drawn down there, were in high spirits, and wished to be ordered to join General Washington, but our council would not permit General Nelson to march to the northward, as he desired. It may not be amiss to inform you of one of the late arts of the disaffected. They, knowing the reputation of Congress for truth, make use of the names of its members as the means of gaining credit to their infernal lies. At Frazier's ferry, I saw one Card, of Urbanna, who told me that he heard Colonel Corbin, at Mr. Braxton's, say, that he had seen a letter from you, in which you mention Howe's force, at that time at Elk, to be 17,000 men, and that a fleet of 200 ships was gone up the Delaware, with another army. By such base means, they endeavour to intimidate our people.

I am, dear sir, with great respect, your affectionate friend and humble servant,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

Mansfield, September 23d, 1777.

Richard Henry Lee, Esquire,
In Congress, Philadelphia.

My dear Sir—I am greatly obliged to you for your two last letters, which contain the most agreeable and important intelligence. Agreeable to your request, I have sent copies of them to your brother, and have been these two days busied in taking other copies for our friends; a little of the same sort of intelligence from Mr. Howe's army, would effectually determine our cause, and fix our independence beyond the power of the tyrant's arms. I have not yet heard whether our assembly have proceeded to business. One thing, however, I was informed of the other day, in Prince William, which was, that the old faction was determined again to attack your character in Assembly; for which purpose, their cats-paw has carried down with him to Williamsburg, an attested copy of your letter to Scott. I am at a loss to say whether their malice or their folly is greatest. I was of the opinion, that your last victory over them was so complete that they would hardly enter the lists with you again; but, in depraved minds, the hope of revenge is so sweet, they will attempt any thing and every thing to effect their wicked purpose. Can't you spare time to come and put to silence and

confusion, such a set of miscreants. Colonel Mason has not yet gone down; he is busy, I am told, in preparing a bill for a general assessment, and a militia bill.

I am, dear sir, with great respect,
Your affectionate friend,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

Mansfield, October 27th, 1777.

Richard Henry Lee, Esquire,
In Congress, at Yorktown,
in Pennsylvania.

MANSFIELD, June 23d, 1778.

My dear Sir—The newspapers inform us that Lord Carlisle, Governor Johnstone, and Mr. Eden, had arrived at Philadelphia, as commissioners from the court of London, but we do not learn what powers they are vested with, or whether they have any others than those set forth in the acts of Parliament. If they have nothing else to offer, I should suppose they could have no serious expectations that Congress would waste their time upon a subject which they have before considered, and, therefore, need not be over solicitous for their secretary to be admitted to Congress, unless they mean to try the arts of corruption, since the force of arms has failed. If that is their aim, I trust, they will find American virtue too stubborn to admit of any impressions from such base objects. Has the number of our forces increased so as to make our army respectable? Where are they, and what are they doing? What seems to be the design of the enemy? Have they received, or do they expect, any considerable reinforcements. We have no news in this part of the country, Farewell, my dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

Richard Henry Lee, Esquire,
In Congress, Yorktown, in
Pennsylvania.

FREDERICKSBURG, June 15th, 1781.

My dear Colonel—I am honoured with yours of 14th inst. and find myself happy, in having an officer in the lower parts, that gives satisfaction; nothing but an absolute necessity at *any time* induced the marquis to draw a single man from the north side of Rappahanoc, he is well informed of their exposed situation, and when they were on this occasion drawn together, it was on a supposition that this quarter would be attacked; and nothing saved us from a visit, but a fortunate circumstance in taking up all the bridges of the marquis's rout, and removing every thing from town that made an object, of which they got intelligence, and instantly struck at Charlottsville. On their pointing so far south, I suggested to the marquis, the propriety of sending the troops under my command, to the cultivation of their fields, under certain restrictions; I am this morning honoured with his approbation, and have given directions accordingly; they will return on furlough till called on, which will not be till danger of a serious nature appears. In the mean time, their present arrangements had better be continued, which will add more security to the internal defence of their own counties, should a party of plunderers visit you; however, this I leave to your own good judgment, well knowing your prudence and activity in times of alarm. A general exertion, and close attention, for a few months longer, will, I am perfectly certain, make us a happy people. With respect to our operations on James river, I refer you to Mr. Lee, who is now with me. Your letters to Congress, were despatched per express. I have every assurance of a plentiful supply of arms, by the first of next month; under these circumstances, I hope yet to see the Big Knife extricate herself. Congress have ordered three battalions of militia from Maryland, and four from Pennsylvania to our aid, and Maryland dragoons are now on their march. I am endeavouring to form a small legion of horse and foot, young men with no families, and volunteers, for the general protection of the four lower counties; pray add your influence. They will cover the country in time of harvest, and give the planters and farmers opportunity to cultivate their fields. Colonel Nelson has general instructions on that head. I am, with perfect respect and esteem.

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE WEEDON.

Col. Richard Henry Lee, Westmoreland.

FREDERICKSBURG, August 2d, 1781.

My dear Colonel—I am favoured with yours of yesterday's date, by Mr. Lee, and rest perfectly contented on the score of intelligence, from the precautions you have so wisely adopted. I informed you in a previous letter, that a small supply of arms and powder, would at any time be sent to you on your order. Having no continental stores of a military nature at this post, I have taken the liberty of sending you a reenforcement, the property of the state, for which stretch of authority, I must apologise to government. They wishing the appropriation of the arms to be applied according to their own ideas, at present, from the difficulties that have occurred in consequence of the derangements in our state, they find it hard to apply them properly; I have, however, persuaded them out of one thousand stand for the use of the Neck, which at this time, lays at Noland's ferry, and will be brought forward so soon as I can get wagons. These will be distributed by their order, which will issue in favour of the counties, who make their requisitions to the executive. *Communicate this hint to your brother, ... in the four lower counties*; by which means, I make no doubt you will immediately get in condition as to arms. Lead we have none; I have represented it several times to government, and was ever answered they had none to furnish; the mines having failed, I am at a loss what to advise you to on this head, and must leave it to your own invention and activity. The northern mail being taken at, or near Wilmington, and carried to New York, we have no intelligence from that quarter this week. The operations before New York, are (you may be well satisfied) of a serious nature; how far we have carried our approaches, can't tell, having lost my letters by the villany of the post-rider, or some other enemy. Not a word of an official nature from General Greene; reports however are favourable. I am, with perfect esteem and attachment,

Your affectionate friend,

GEORGE WEEDON.

Col. Richard Henry Lee,
commanding in Westmoreland co.

CAMP, GLOUCESTER COURT HOUSE, 20th Sept., 1781.

Dear Sir—I am so anxious that the distressed situation of our army and that of our allies, may not be the occasion of fatal consequences, that I most earnestly request you to

give every assistance in your power, not only to aid the commissioners in the collection, but in immediately forwarding the cattle so collected, with the utmost despatch to General Washington's army. Permit me to assure you most faithfully, that this so necessary supply, can alone give the promised glorious end of our honourable struggle, and every nerve must be strained, that a moment be not lost. Your judgment will best direct the nearest rout, and have most perfect dependence, that the Northern Neck will distinguish itself on this occasion. You will turn out a sufficient number of militia instantly, to forward this work. Orders are gone on to the commissioners; and this is only to pray your influence on so important and momentous an occasion. You are hereby empowered to impress every thing necessary to facilitate this business. I am with esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE WEEDON, B. G.

Col. Richard Henry Lee, Westmoreland co.

Sir—Lord Dunmore orders me to the Ohio with his lordship, to endeavour to put matters on a footing to establish a lasting peace with the brave natives; who, in my opinion, would behave well, were they not poisoned by the blackguard traders allowed to go among them, to their different towns. This prevents my attending the general Congress, where I would expect to see the spirit of the Amphyctions shine, as that illustrious council did in their purest times, before debauched with the Persian gold. The fate of America depends upon your meeting, and the eyes of the European world hang upon you, waiting the event. Despotism, and the Roman Catholic religion is established in Canada. Can we be said to enjoy liberty, if the villain who ravishes our wives, deflours our daughters, or murders our sons, can evade punishment, by being tried in Britain, where no evidence can pursue him?

A governor to suppose me guilty of a crime, and tell me that there can be no fair trial in America; that is, there are not honest men to be found in my country to try me, he must send me home to rot in Newgate, is shocking to human nature. Could I get within musket shot of him, I would put him to death; he should never attempt to send home another. In the mean time, I must acquaint you, that the situation of America, that is, the parts of it I am acquainted with, is un-

happy in not being provided in arms and ammunition. At the Congress this ought to be privately taken into consideration; a plan laid for encouraging numbers of gun-lock smiths to come in; a number of locks to be imported with caution, to prevent suspicion; and as many arms as could be got. I imagine that we want 100,000 stand of arms. We have great difficulty in fitting out the few men we want on this occasion. Contrive a supply of ammunition; let some be brought in by every ship. I wish the united wisdom of America may prevent it, but I expect, from their determined system of arbitrary power at home, that matters will come to extremity. It appears to me, that they intend to irritate America into rebellion, and then govern us like a conquered people. Try all fair means with the greatest address to avoid it, but be prepared for the worst as soon as possible; this ought not to escape consideration at this time, and it is a thing that requires the utmost address. Let us be provided with arms and ammunition, and individuals may suffer, but the gates of hell cannot prevail against America; our greatest enemies would be the despotic tools of Canada. Before provision is made for these things, the hand of power will prevail. I wish the happy issue of your councils, and am with respect, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

Berkeley Courthouse, August 27th, 1774

P. S. Pardon this scrawl, I am on the march.

My dear Colonel—A grateful remembrance of old friendship will, I hope, apologize for my troubling you so often, without hearing the least whisper from you, since I came from the Shawanese expedition.

The important session of Assembly, big with matters of great moment, is now at hand. I wish that a firm and dispassionate conduct may shine through the whole, and all our pasions may be soothed by agreeable accounts from the new Parliament. I must acknowledge my dread to hear from them. Several sensible men, lately from England, inform us the people there seem but little affected with our dispute; and that, they, without thought or consideration, declare that America ought to be taxed.

In these troublesome times, it is absolutely necessary that you pay the men employed in the late expedition; they have done honour to our country. The Indians are daily deliver-

ing up prisoners and horses, and do really stand in awe of us. Unless the men are paid off directly, their certificates will be sold, for a fourth part of their value, to pedlars and store-keepers, and the brave men who did the service, be nothing the better of their pay. Appoint commissioners from below to settle the accounts; let no interested persons, or their connexions, be concerned in the affair; send the squire up again, Tom Marshall and Frank Peyton, and as many more as you think proper. By this means the people will have justice done them, and, at the same time, many thousands will be saved to the country. The House must settle what pay they are to get per day, and from what time they are to be paid, as they were raised and detained some considerable time for want of arms and ammunition; this time was employed in disciplining them for the service; but, without the consideration and sanction of the House, the commissioners may think it matter of altercation. With the greatest economy, matters on this quarter were managed; but the expense of Fort Pitt must be kept apart by itself, as I am afraid the reverse of economy will appear there; it has no connexion with the rest of the campaign. I would have you discharge that garrison immediately; but then, I desire you may keep my opinion to yourself. In renewing the militia law, let there be one hundred well appointed horse disciplined in every county; to be superior in horse commands the field, and no enemy can safely show himself out of sight of their camp; we are immediately apprised of the strength of their escorts, and of every motion they make, and can act accordingly. At the courts martial, let a majority present determine any matter; and, during an attack, or in battle, let the men be subject to the articles of war, with what alteration the House thinks proper. Until the men, who want fire-arms, can be provided, let them be furnished with spears and tomahawks; the iron of the spear to be made in shape of a triangular bayonet, only broader at the shoulder, to go on the staff with a large socket, and thin plates of iron reaching up the staff about two feet, to stiffen it, and guard it against any cutting instrument, the plates being part of the socket; the spear of the men in front to be six inches larger than the musket with fixed bayonet; those of the second rank eighteen inches longer than the spears in front, and those in the third rank eighteen inches longer than the second, that three spears may reach the breast of the enemy at once, before our men could be touched with the first bayonet. This moment, I am informed that the Assembly is prorogued till May; confusion worse confounded; I wish, for the en-

couragement of the soldiers, that you would meet in provincial Congress, and order an emission of bills of credit for their payment. I am sorry that Lord Dunmore may depend on it, the militia will never obey his orders again. If the country has a mind to secure useful men, it is absolutely necessary to contrive some method to pay the common men, if the officers and provisions should lie over; let us be firm, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against us. A handful of men in Canada, six broken regiments from France, withstood, for five years, all the force of British fleets, and armies from home, and fifteen or twenty thousand Americans every campaign. They gained several victories over us, and chance had a great hand in their reduction at last. What can we do, if united. We only want a navy to give law to the world, and we have it in our power to get it.

I am, dear sir, firmly your's,

ADAM STEPHEN.

February 1st, 1775.

February 17th, 1775.

Dear Sir—Since I had an opportunity of forwarding the enclosed, I put it in my pocket, and thought I should never trouble you with it, but I cannot forbear communicating my sentiments upon so alarming an occasion. If in the colony Congress the members should resolve to acquaint the men employed in the last expedition, that they would be paid, as soon as the general commotions are settled, it would keep them in heart; and, indeed, it would be highly imprudent to disgust a body of such useful men, at this important era; for, by what I can hear, it will come to the shedding of blood, unless providence interferes in a very special manner; for my part, before I would submit my life, liberty, and property to the arbitrary disposal of a corrupt, venal aristocracy, the wanton and effeminate tools of power, I would set myself down, with a few friends, upon some rich and healthy spot, six hundred miles to the westward, and there form a settlement, which, in a short time, would, command attention and respect. I wish you happy, and have the honour to be, with respect,

Dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

Colonel Richard Henry Lee,
Of Westmoreland.

Sir—Since my last, we have received advices from the Wiandots, a sensible nation, who live near to Detroit, and have great influence on the contiguous tribes of Indians. It may be plainly seen that they are a great deal attached to the commanding officer at Detroit. Some of them have promised to come and hear what we have to say; that is their policy; they have, very lately, killed a trader's servant, and carried off part of the goods. The nation has made an apology, and the goods are restored to the owner. We have advices, likewise, from the tribes living up the Alleghany river, about one hundred and sixty miles above this place; several of them have been at a treaty held at Niagara, and inform us that many Indians are gone to Albany, but a greater number to Caghnuwaga, near Montreal, at the instigation of Gay, Johnston, and Carlton.

The commandant of Niagara and Johnston, told them to watch our motions here very narrowly, and the red coats, and other English, would fight us by ships, whilst the Indians kept picking us off on our frontier; that we could not hold out long for want of powder, as we usually had it from Britain, and could not make any amongst ourselves; that he would supply them plentifully with powder, and every thing else. I can see that the Indians are very jealous, greatly divided, and at a loss how to act. General Schuyler's success will settle the matter; but an unsuccessful attempt will determine the greatest part of the western Indians against us; perhaps make it necessary to take possession of Niagara and Detroit.

We have reason to expect all the Indians, who intend to come to us, will attend next week.

I have the honour to be, with respect sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

Pittsburgh, September 23d, 1775.

Colonel Richard Henry Lee,
of Virginia, Philadelphia.

Dear Sir—I languished to hear from you, and at last received the pleasure of your letter yesterday. The sending Americans to their antipodes, was as wicked and extensive a plan, as the agents of the devil could form on earth. I suppose the intended attack on our state, is a creature of the

volatile Burgoyne, engendered on Lady Dunmore or his Lordship, who doubtless will attend with his council, in order to add some more odoriferous beauties to his Ethiopian seraglios.

Should they get the troops, which I reckon impossible, they may distress individuals, but can do nothing towards conquering our country. To prevent this attack, and obviate all difficulty, our principal object ought to be the distruction of their army in the Jerseys. Virtue is certainly wanting, or we should have had men enough to have effected it before this time. The Virginians, with a few Jersey men, and as few Pennsylvanians, are likely to bear the burden of the day; the myriads of the north; the great warriors, who were to do the business, if we found money, seem cloyed of fighting, and are wonderfully backward in turning out. I wish no attention had been given to the defence of the western frontier, further than having the militia supplied with ammunition, and embodied. The clouds which threaten from Canada, and the savages, and all other *petites*, whould have dispersed, yea, dissolved like meteors, upon the destruction of Howe's army. On Monday, the 14th, I resolved the enemy should make compensation for their excursion to Boundbrook; I went along the out posts of my division, with General Maxwell, and planned the attack of their pickets, at Amboy and Borum town. Captain Conway, of the first Jersey regiment, behaved to admiration, brought off three out sentries without disturbing the guard, and got the countersign; in short, he had nothing to do but kill, or bring off, fifty men of the picket, when he was unhappily abandoned by the men of the second Jersey regiment, and obliged to drop the affair.

The attack at Borum town, was more successful, the picket were all taken or killed, except three.

I am, with great esteem, dear sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
ADAM STEPHEN.

CHATHAM, April 22d, 1777

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE,
in Congress, Philadelphia.

PARIS, September 21st, 1778.

MY DEAR BROTHER—By my letter to the committee of this date, you will see that I have delivered to the commissioners here, a copy of the treaty which I had negotiated with Holland, and which I have strong reasons for believing I could have soon brought to a conclusion, had my authority

from Congress been sufficient. But what will be the issue now may be easily foreseen; the overweening self sufficiency of *one*, and the latent plans that every one supposes has been formed of contriving Mr. D——'s return to H——, with other and similar motives, will all conspire to interrupt the success. Besides, very unhappily, things are minutely communicated to a person, that, in my opinion, ought not to be trusted with any thing; of this person Congress has been informed, I understand, having formerly given intelligence relative to the treaty with France. If this business with Holland is communicated, in its present stage, to our enemies, or their emissaries in that country, of which they have a great number, it will infallibly be obstructed. All this I expect, however; I have done my duty, and hope Congress will approve my conduct. I am entirely of opinion with you relative to the estate and will; send the proper instruments, as soon as they can be got ready, which is attended with more difficulty than you can well imagine, in a strange country. The season is now so far advanced, that it will be impossible to get the documents to you time enough to proceed on the business before winter twelve months, as about Christmas is the only time for such a business to be done. I wish to know accurately, when and how the principal money is to be repaid that is put into the continental loan offices; and if, in the mean time, the billets given for cash, can be sold or converted into cash, easily and without loss. Pray answer me in this as soon as possible, and send me the rest of Congress proceedings, having only received one volume, for which I greatly thank you; my station is quite out of the way for sending newspapers, pamphlets, &c.; I understand you get them from hence. I return to Germany immediately, and lose no occasion of promoting the wishes of Congress in that quarter. The Virginia business is a heavy one; I am afraid the ministry here will not do what the state expected. and without them the business cannot be accomplished in this country, but on such terms, and in such a manner, as is shamefully horrible to think of; the first demand, however, is nearly accomplished, but there is four times as much yet to be done; I am now pushing the subject as far as I can. Your sons are well. We have not any material news, and I have only time to assure you of my continued and steady affection.

Adieu.

WILLIAM LEE.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq. Member of Congress from the state of Virginia.

CAMP, December 12, 1775.

My dear Friend—I have just received your letter by Mr. Custis. I am heartily glad that you have sent a committee into Canada, but *inter nos*, think it might have been better chosen. Payne has certainly not the *mannieres** . . which, according to Lord Chesterfield, and my observation, are so requisite to captivate the French; for heaven's sake, my dear friend, why are you not more decisive, and wherefore are any of the sea-port towns suffered to furnish the men of war with fresh meat, or even with a single carrot; this indecision will ruin us; this cursed tenderness for the sea-port towns will at least prolong the war and all its calamities. It was indecision that has thrown your affairs in Virginia, into their present situation; had my opinion been thought worthy of attention, Lord Dunmore should have been disarmed of his teeth and his claws. I proposed sending Tryon, and all his tories, at New York. I knew if it was moved in Congress his excellency would be instantly apprised of it, and of course the possibility of effecting it would not be left to us; in this persuasion, I would have struck the stroke, and applied afterwards to your mightiness for approbation. You will justly accuse me of self conceit and egotism, but I have not yet done. I propose, therefore, the following measures: First, To seize every governor, government man, place man, tory, and enemy to liberty, on the continent, to confiscate their estates, or, at least, lay them under heavy contributions, for the public; their persons should be secured in some of the interior towns, as hostages for their treatment of those of our party whom the fortune of war shall throw into their hands; they should be allowed a reasonable pension out of their fortunes for their maintenance. Secondly, I propose that New York be strongly garrisoned and fortified, or destroyed. Thirdly, That a strong flying camp, with not only an able officer at their head, but an officer who has the *reputation* of being able, in order to inspire the people with confidence, be kept about Hampton, York, or Williamsburg, in Virginia; another, not quite so strong, about Alexandria; and a third strong one about Annapolis, in Maryland. Fourth, That Charlestown, in Carolina, should be well secured. Fifth, and lastly, That, if the Canadians desire it, you spare no expense in furnishing them with an army; but, above all, that you be extremely careful in the choice of officers sent to that country; that they be not only men of strict integrity, but of a frank, open address, with elevated sentiments ex-

* Out in the original.

pressed in their manner. I should think such men may be found with you more easily than in these provinces, as I find you propose in your letter, for I never saw a people so universally destitute *du l'air du monde*, as these here; Mr. Bodwoin, an invalid, is the only exception. These propositions I before offered to a member of your Congress, with one other, respecting the construction of your army, here omitted.

Recruiting goes on here more briskly than we expected: the men are strange mortals, but they have virtue, and many good qualities. Adieu, my dear friend.

Your's affectionately,

C. LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 5, 1776.

My dear Friend—I congratulate the public, and you, one of her best members, on the late glorious event, the flight of the tyrants, cut throats, from Boston; although I do not know whether it is a matter of congratulation, for it appears to me, that as our affairs grow more prosperous, the namby pamby's of the senatorial part of the continent (great and small) grow more timid and hysterical; I am sorry to say it, but your committee of safety seem to be as desperately and incurably infected with this epidemical malady as the provincial congress of Maryland, or the quondam assembly of Pennsylvania. Your brother, Mr. Page, Payne, and I believe Mercer, are indeed exceptions. If you could be spared from the Congress, your presence might inspire vigour and wisdom. Their economy is of a piece with their wisdom and valour; to save money, we have no carriages to our guns; to save money, we have no blankets for our men, who are, from want of this essential, dying by dozens at Suffolk. Had I gun carriages, I could flatter myself with almost a certainty of driving the pirates, and shutting them out for ever from the harbour of Norfolk. I have, however, ordered them to be made with all possible expedition, and then shall attempt this capital stroke. My command from the circumstances of the country being intersected by navigable waters, and the enemy being supplied with canvass to fly to any spot they choose, is disagreeable. I may make a very shabby figure, without any real demerits of my own. I know not where to turn, or where to fix myself. I may, as Richard the Third says, be in the west, when I should serve my sovereign in the north. I can only act from surmises, and I may

surmise wrong; but I must venture, and take my measures accordingly. I am apt to think that Williamsburg and York will be their object; the possession of the first is not only most temptingly advantageous, from its command of the two rivers and a most abundant country, but its being a capital, the possession would give an air of dignity and decided superiority to their arms, which, in a slave country, is of the utmost importance. Your dominion over the blacks is founded on opinion; if this opinion falls, your authority is lost. On this principle I am drawing down some battalions, and shall, when I can provide intrenching tools, work for the security of these places. For God's sake, why do you dandle in the Congress so strangely? why do you not at once declare yourself a separate independent state? *I am much obliged* to you for keeping my letter in your hands, and am happy that the stigma was not levelled at me. Appropos, will you move, as my command is separate, and scarcely any letters are addressed to me, even those not written by the members of the Congress, which do not relate to public business, whilst I continue in this separate command, should be frank, for the expense is very considerable. I wish you would cuff Dr. Rush, for not writing. I expect and insist upon it. A Colonel Grayson, (whom I suppose you are acquainted with) will be soon with the Congress, to make application for some military establishment; I am desired to recommend him as a man of extraordinary merit. We must have a continental hospital in the southern department; Dr. M'Clurg, is, I am told, very well qualified to be at head of it. My little German engineer is (as the New Englanders say) a nice man. But I wish I knew what pay and rank you intend him; I have hitherto supported him myself, but shall send in a bill for his nourishment. Adieu, my dear senator,

Your's, and your brother's,

Most affectionately,

C. LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 12, 1776.

My dear Friend—I am much pleased with the appointment of the Congress of the two engineers, and not less so with . . . . . establishment; but at the same time am a good deal dissatisfied by an omission of the provincial congress of Virginia in not having mentioned a company of artillery which they had already raised, and at the head of which a Captain Innis was placed; you perhaps know him, he was

formerly usher of the German school here, is a man of extraordinary virtue, good sense and knowledge; the thought of discharging such men is extremely disagreeable. I hope some means may be devised of providing for him in a manner adequate to his merit. If a commissary of ordnance, is to be an established office, it would suit him; there is, I understand, to be, likewise, a commissary of musters, I would beg leave to recommend a Mr. Archer, who has a most unexceptionable character, and lost his all, his household goods and slaves, in the destruction of Norfolk. These sufferers have certainly, (when qualified for the discharge of their duty) the first and most solid claim to the favour of the Congress. As I can have no jobs in view, as I have no predilections or connexions, I shall make no scruples of appointing to act, and entreating the Congress to confirm my appointments. I have myself no doubt, that the first attempt of the tyrant's mercenaries will be on Virginia. My opinion of your troops and officers, is, thank God, so good, as to put me entirely at my ease with respect to action, corps to corps. I only wish your provincial Congress and committee of safety, had taken some precautions for the security of your great navigable rivers against their piratical inundations; and in my opinion, nothing could be easier effected. Perhaps I may differ from the generality of sea-faring people; but as they have their prejudices, and are like other professions, a *servum pecus*, I shall not give up my opinion. I would then propose fitting your rivers with twelve or eighteen oared boats, mounting a six-pounder at the head of each, fortifying the sides with occasional mantlets, musket proof, and manning them with stout volunteers, whose principle should be boarding. I am mistaken, when we are sufficiently provided with fleets of this kind, if a single tender will show itself in your rivers. I have already, for experiment sake, sent out one boat, armed and principled in this manner, on a cruise, and expect with impatience the issue. The men have their cutlasses and pistols, and seem to taste the project. I shall order twenty for each great river; the expense is trifling, and the spirit, the very principle of coming to close quarters, will inspire naturally the people with confidence in their own force and valour. Another great point I seem in a fair way of obtaining; the conciliating your soldiers to the use of spears; we had a battalion out this day; two companies of the strongest and tallest, were armed with this weapon; they were formed something like the Triarii of the Romans, in the rear of the battalions, occasionally either to throw themselves into the intervals of the line, or to form a third, second,

or front rank in close order. It has a fine effect to the eye, and the men in general seemed convinced of the utility of the arrangement. In two days, I shall visit Norfolk, Suffolk, and Kemp's landing.

Your's, affectionately,

CHARLES LEE.

RICHMOND, December 11th, 1784.

Dear Sir—I was, by Thursday's post, favoured with your's of the 26th of November. We had begun to despair of a Congress being made up in time for a decision on the case referred to them by the resolutions of our last session. I now hope that we may yet hear from you, on that subject, before our adjournment. The bill on the resolutions in favour of the treaty of peace, mentioned in my last, is not yet reported. It will, I am persuaded, need the reenforcement of an exhortation from Congress. The Glasgow merchants have authorized their agents here to compromise for the payment of their debts in four years, and a memorial will, I understand, be presented to that effect in a few days. My next will inform you of the result. The past week has been spent chiefly on the assize bill, which yesterday past the house of delegates with a very feeble opposition, and a very few dissenting voices. Its fate now depends on the senate. It is pretty analogous to the nisi prius establishment of England. The number of assize courts is seventeen. A smaller number was proposed, but we thought ourselves lucky in being able to give general content by such an augmentation. The counties of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Richmond, and Lancaster, form one district; the court house of the first being the seat of the assize court. The friends of this measure here considered it as a foundation for a very important and salutary amendment of our judicial system. The bill for a general assessment has not yet undergone a discussion; the same is the case of the militia bill. The scheme for opening the navigation of the Potomac, which has been settled between the Maryland and . . . . gentlemen, is before the House of Delegates, and will be favoured, as far as the objectionable amount of the tolls will admit. As the concurrence of Maryland in this scheme is necessary, some difficulties will attend its progress. The difficulty of providing for a representation of this state in Congress, under the act for the annual meet-

ing of the Assembly, has been a subject of conversation. The loss of that benefit is a serious matter; but is not the appointing of delegates a year before they are to serve, rather a singular expedient? The vacancies in the council had all been filled before the receipt of your recommendation of General Gates. I must beg the favour of you to excuse my not obeying, by this post, the last request in your letter, as to the expediency of a continental convention—having, at present, only time to add, that, with great respect and regard, I have the honour to be,

Your obedient, and very humble servant,
JAMES MADISON, Jun.

RICHMOND, December 25th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—Be pleased to accept my congratulations on the event which has given to your talents a station, in which they cannot fail to be equally useful to the public, and honourable to yourself. I offer them with the greater pleasure too, as such an event is a proof that Congress have unfettered themselves from a rule, which threatened to exclude merit from a choice, in which merit only ought to prevail.* The assize bill has, since my last, past into a law. The senate made no material change in it, and gave an almost unanimous suffrage to it. The only hesitation with them was between that plan and another, which would have rendered the circuit courts independent of the general courts. The former, which follows the English model, unites the advantages of a trial of facts, where facts can be ascertained with greatest certainty and cheapness, with a decision of law, where such decision can be made with most wisdom and uniformity. The advantage of the latter consisted in removing the inconveniency of making up the issues and awarding the judgments, in the general court, which it was supposed would increase expense, if not delay, and particularly require the service of a double number of lawyers. Experience will probably show that the latter supposition is exaggerated, and that the system preferred, is at least the best to begin with. The general assessment bill was ordered to be engrossed by forty-four against forty-two, and has since, by forty-five against thirty-seven, been postponed till November next, and is to be print-

* Mr. Lee had been elected president of Congress.

ed for immediate consideration. An act incorporating the Episcopal church, has passed in a form less offensive than the one proposed at the last session. The bill for payment of British debts was under debate yesterday; its passage seems probable, but there is no reason to fear that attempts will yet be made to trammel it. It still takes seven years for payment, though the Glasgow merchants have signified their assent to four years. The merchants of this town and Petersburgh have remonstrated against the idea of giving the British merchants a summary recovery, at the periods of the instalments. The bill for opening the Potomac, is suspended on the result of a conference. General Washington, General Gates, and Colonel Blackburn, are commissioned to hold conferences with Maryland on the subject. A bill for opening James River, on a different plan, has passed the house of delegates. A bill will also probably pass for surveying the waters of those two rivers to their sources, the country between them, and the western waters, and the latter down to the Ohio. It will also probably provide for a survey of the different routes for a communication between the waters of Elizabeth River and those of North Carolina. In the course of the last week, a proposition was made to empower Congress to collect the imposts within this state, as soon as twelve states should unite in the scheme. The arguments which prevailed against it, were the unfavourable aspect it would present to foreigners; the tendency of the example to inferior combinations; the field it would open to contraband trade; its probable effect on the temper of Rhode Island, which might thwart other necessary measures which require the unanimity of the states; the improbability of the union of twelve states on this new ground, a failure of which would increase the appearance of discord in their policy, and give fresh triumph and invitation to Rhode Island. I have not yet found leisure to scan the project of a continental convention with so close an eye, as to have made up any observations worthy of being mentioned to you. In general, I hold it for a maxim, that the union of the states is essential for their safety against foreign danger and internal contention; and that the perpetuity and efficacy of the present system cannot be confided in. The question therefore is, in what mode and at what moment the experiment for supplying the defects ought to be made. The answer to this question cannot be made without a knowledge greater than I possess, of the temper and views of the different states. Virginia seems, I think, to have excellent dispositions towards the confederacy; but her assent or dissent to such a proposition would pro-

bably depend much on the charge of having no opponent capable of rousing the prejudices and jealousies of the Assembly against innovations, particularly such as will derogate from their own power and importance. Should a view of the other states present no objections against the experiment, individually I would wish none to be presupposed here.

With great esteem and regard,
I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient and humble servant,
JAMES MADISON, Jun.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Virginia.

ANNAPOLIS, December 16th, 1783.

Dear Sir—I am particularly happy to hear by your brother, that you have almost recovered from the indisposition, with which you have been lately afflicted: an event I must consider fortunate to the state and your family, for I flatter myself, when perfectly restored, you will not withdraw yourself from the public service. It must be hoped that those measures, which have hitherto, will not always, prevail; as to establish in our public councils, a greater regard for public faith, and in private life, for morality, your exertions joined with those of some worthy men, must certainly be more successful. I am called on a theatre to which I am a perfect stranger. There are before us some questions of the utmost consequence that can arise in the councils of any nation: the peace establishment; the regulation of our commerce, and the arrangement of our foreign appointments; whether we are to have regular or standing troops to protect our frontiers, or leave them unguarded; whether we will expose ourselves to the inconveniences, which may perhaps be the loss of the country westward, from the impossibility of preventing the adventurers from settling where they please: the intrusion of the settlers on the European powers, who border on us, a cause of discontent and perhaps of war, as with us a constant state of warfare with the savage tribes, to the ingrafting a principle in our constitution which may in its consequences, as it ever hath done with other powers, terminate in the loss of our liberty. How we are to counteract the narrow and illiberal system of commercial policy in the European powers, and what connexion we are to have with them, are also questions of the first import. If your

health will permit, I shall be particularly happy to have your opinion upon these several subjects. It is my desire to hear from you as frequently as possible, and upon those subjects before us, which I shall be happy to make known to you. I am, with the utmost respect and esteem,

Your sincere friend and servant,

JAMES MONROE.

Answer of Richard Henry Lee.

CHANTILLY, January 5th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I have duly received the letter, that you were pleased to favour me with, on the 16th of December last. I am very sensible of your kind sentiments respecting my health; I am indeed restored beyond my expectations, but yet I am very far from being so circumstanced, as to promise hopes of being soon in a state to venture again on the stormy sea of politics, and public business. Few, I believe, feel more sensibly than myself, how much our unhappy country suffers, and is likely to suffer, from the want of those qualities, and such conduct, as are certainly indispensable to the success and well being of society. And it would seem that such feelings are natural to a man, who has laboured for more than twenty years in the public service, and indefatigably so, for the last ten years, to secure the public liberty and those blessings that ought to attend its possession. You do me much honour, by asking my poor opinions concerning the Congressional questions, that are stated; they are of great moment, no doubt, and I heartily wish that they may finally receive proper determination. You are perfectly right, sir, in your observation concerning the consequences of a standing army, that it has constantly terminated in the destruction of liberty. It has not only been constantly so, but I think it clear from the construction of human nature, that it always will be so; and it is really unfortunate for human freedom, safety, and happiness, that so many plausible arguments are ever at hand to support a system, which both reason and experience prove to be productive of the greatest of human evils—slavery. But it may be questioned—Why, to avoid possible ills, should we adopt measures which in their nature produce the highest evil? The spirit of the 4th section of the 6th article of the conferation, plainly discourages the idea of a standing army, by the special injunctions concerning a

well regulated militia, which is indeed the best defence, and only proper security for a free people to venture upon. To guard our frontiers from Indian invasions, to prevent irregular settlements, and to secure the possessions of foreign powers from the encroachments of our people, which may provoke foreign or Indian wars, seem to be the reasons assigned for their adoption of this mischief working system—a standing military force. But surely it is the business of other powers, to secure their own possessions, and punish the violators of them; and it would be as new, as it would be improper, to keep a standing army, to prevent the encroachments of our own citizens upon foreign states: it will ever be sufficient to disavow such proceedings and to give the culprits up to justice. As to the protection of our frontiers, it would seem best to leave it to the people themselves, as has ever been the case, and if at any time the frontier men should be too hard pressed, they may be assisted by the midland militia; this will always secure us a hardy set of men on the frontiers, used to arms, and always ready to assist against invasions on other parts; whereas if they are protected by regulars, security will necessarily produce inattention to arms, and the whole of our people becoming disused to war, will render the curse of a standing army necessary. In this light the Indians may be considered as a useful people, for it is surely fortunate for a free people to be under some necessity of keeping the whole body acquainted with the use of arms. Should the fear of Indians in some measure check the settlement of that country, it can be no inconvenience to a people already inhabiting much too thinly the country they possess. Irregular settlers, I think, may be kept away, by timely and judicious proclamations of Congress, forbidding such practices, and peremptorily assuring that no titles shall ever follow such settlements; and perhaps, also, by having a few persons near the scene, authorized to give notice to all goers there, upon their first appearance. If the horrid evil of a standing army must be encountered, it is clear to me, that such forces had better be placed in judiciously chosen fortified places, to give protection to our own commerce, and that of foreigners. But I must confess, I would infinitely rather see this valuable purpose effected by the more safe and effectual measure of a navy, *which I sincerely hope will be the constant and unremitting object of Congressional attention;* and both the building and the manning of this navy should be as much as possible, dispersed throughout the thirteen states. With respect to trade, its combinations are so many, and so exclusive, that it is not easy to say much with propriety on that

subject hastily: but one thing, respecting that, is evident, it is, that the free nature and genius of commerce always requires as little restraint as possible, and that in young commercial states, to embarrass trade with heavy imposts, or other clogs, is effectually to demolish it. How grievously do I lament that this is fully and fatally the case in our ill-fated country. In our actual circumstances, it is difficult to meet and check effectually, the illiberal commercial conduct of the European states, except by counter and similar restraints; but the want of men and vessels, for the present, renders this difficult, if not impossible. A wise attention to the raising of seamen and building of ships, may in time cause these selfish states, to rue their selfish policy. Do you not think that it would be well for Congress, to regulate and bring to uniformity the business of weights and measures, throughout the United States, and also, to establish an uniformity in the value of coins; our country, in particular, is suffering great loss for want of the latter regulations. I am, dear sir, with great respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

NEW YORK, May 24th, 1786.

DEAR SIR—I have no excuse for having been so indifferent a correspondent, except that I had nothing to communicate to you, and I knew that of this you were apprised by your brother, Colonel Lee. Lately, however, we have received despatches from Mr. Adams, of a very interesting nature. He presented, some time about November last, a memorial to the ministry, requiring a delivery of the posts, and compensation for the infraction of the treaty respecting the negroes; to which he received for answer, "that it was unquestionably true, that, by the seventh article, the posts should have been evacuated; but that, by the fourth and ninth, it was also stipulated that there should be no legal impediment in the way of the recovery of British debts; that these articles had been violated by almost every state in the confederacy. Lord Carmarthen enumerates all the acts of the several states which militate against the treaty, with great precision, and finally states, that it would be folly for one party to carry its engagements into effect, while the other

neglected theirs; that, provided the United States would comply on their part, the king would on his." This, I think, is the amount of the despatch from Mr. Adams, from which the injunction of secrecy is removed, so that you may be under no restraint in your communications on the subject. We shall state it to the executive, for the information of the legislature. We have lately been much perplexed by a proposition from Connecticut, for ceding her claims to territory westward one hundred and twenty miles of the Pennsylvania line, by which she retains a right, by implication, to one hundred and twenty miles. We have been informed that she and Pennsylvania are on the point of variance with respect to Wioming, and that this land is necessary to satisfy the Susquehannah and Delaware companies of Connecticut, who create this mischief, whereby peace will be restored to the Union. We are also apprised, that, unless we accept this cession, Connecticut will open an office for the whole degree claimed by her, to the Mississippi, for sale. A proposition has been made reserving to the United States whatever they have acquired under the cession of Virginia, and negatived; and one confirming the decree of Trenton, or rather requiring that Connecticut should cede her claim to Pennsylvania, as therein decreed, met with the same fate; the latter as connected with the former, which, being negatived, gave a more pointed implication in favour of Connecticut; there it now stands. To-day it will be taken up again, and I suppose it will be passed. When shall we have the pleasure of seeing you here; you have, in a great degree, the friendship and good wishes of our family. Miss Shortwright and Mrs. Monroe desire to be most affectionately remembered to you. I shall always be happy to hear from you, and am sincerely your friend and servant,

JAMES MONROE.

KING GEORGE, April 4, 1783.

DEAR SIR—I am sorry my engagement to return immediately to Richmond, deprived me of the pleasure, or I should be happy to wait on you, to pay my respects to yourself and family, at Chantilly. It is with concern I hear you have thoughts of withdrawing from the service of your country.

If your guidance and direction of this state, through her difficulties, encompassed as she has been with those of every kind, hath hitherto been an object worthy your attention, certainly those arrangements which should take place upon the establishment of her sovereignty, as with respect to the order of the government, (if any change should be thought necessary,) as the enacting those laws which may be calculated to form and adapt the spirit and temper of the people to the degree, are equally important. These are, no doubt, objects of the utmost consequence, and as certainly as they are committed to the care of able and virtuous, or unskilful and designing men, will the people feel the good or bad effects, perhaps for ages to come. Many, who retain the prejudices of a monarchical education, many young men, just from school, and many without any education at all, now the day of difficulty is over, will be desirous of obtaining seats in the legislature; those who form the latter class, must act in subservience to men of talents, and whatever be the talents these young men may possess, they are neither calculated nor will they have the public confidence so far as to take the lead in the republic. Those elderly gentlemen, who, in addition to the acquirements of study, from the direction and management of our public affairs, during the contest, have become profoundly versed in the windings of the human heart, and in the affairs of government, not only possess the confidence of the people, but, in every view, are those who, upon the present occasion, should stand forth, and take the lead. They are without these prejudices, or the intemperate heat of youth, and as the state has grown up in her independence, under their honest care, in the arrangements they will propose, they will be guided by their wisdom, and the affections of a parent to its offspring; and, under their auspices, the people may expect such wholesome regulations as will make them ever bless the . . . of opposition and of independence. In the faithful and able part you have acted upon the late theatre, decisive and independent as you have been, you have not failed to make enemies, but the malignity of the people has not been able to effect the minds of the public who have looked on with deliberation, and assured by events of the eminent integrity and propriety of your conduct, have felt themselves more grateful and warmly interested in your favour, in proportion as these attacks have been more base and ungenerous. Believe me, your retreat from the public service is a matter which will not be lamented only by a partial part of the state, you will pardon the liberty I have

taken in joining the wishes of a citizen to those of a friend; and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard, very affectionately yours.

JAMES MONROE.

DANBURY, 23d September, 1778.

DEAR SIR—The bearer, Dr. Johnston, being delayed by a storm, I have time to own the receipt of your obliging letter, by Major Biggelow; lest that should not have been the case, I have desired Mr. Andrew Adams to show you my letter to him, for whom it was equally intended with himself. I look upon the present moments as the most critical to America of any that have passed since the war. If the enemy should succeed in a sudden and bold stroke upon the town and harbour of Boston, all their misfortunes are repaired, and our blooming prospects destroyed. If we take a decisive part, and arrive, with the army, in time, in the neighbourhood of Boston, we may make a glorious finishing of the war. Flour is the only article I dread the want of; I foresaw this in the very beginning of June, and wrote, the third of that month, to Congress, to press the immediate formation of a large magazine in the eastern states. When you consider, sir, that our army, the French fleet, the prisoners of war, and all the militia it may be necessary to call to defend our country, and our allies, are to be fed from one magazine, you will allow that it ought to be a large one, and collected in time; for all our sakes, move heaven and earth to the accomplishment of this one thing so necessary. It being a natural consequence of our alliance with France, that we ought fairly to assist each other with the most salutary counsels, I hope Congress will not neglect the opportunity which the late engagement of the Compte D'Etaing, with the French fleet, affords us, to show them our sincerity; the improper length of the ship-guns of the French, which renders that nation inferior to the English, when equal, and even superior, in every other respect, might be introduced, with great propriety, to the French ministry, without offending their pride, and it clearly appears from Maudil's handbill, how much England dreads such counsels. When you write to Mr. Arthur Lee, present him with my affectionate respects; when the campaign is finished, I shall answer his polite let-

ter in a manner, I hope, that will give him the utmost satisfaction. Remember me to all those you know to be friends, and believe me, with the truest attachment and regard,

Dear sir,

Your much obliged, humble servant,

HORATIO GATES.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee.

Letters from William Lee, Esquire, American Agent at the Court of Holland.

FRANKFORT, Germany, October 17, 1778.

R. H. Lee, Esq.

My dear Brother—I send you, with this, some magazines and Parliamentary registers of last session; my remote situation prevents me from sending you more things in this way, or the English papers; surely, you must get all these things from Paris, for though France and Great Britain have been some time at actual hostilities, yet, as there has not been any formal declaration, the communication between London and Paris, is as open as in time of profound peace. To what I have said to your committee, relative to the plan of a treaty with Holland, I will add, that, it is said, that the States General, in their grand meeting, since my meeting with Mr. D'Aneufville, have seriously deliberated about openly acknowledging the American independence. How the deliberation has ended, I have not been able to learn; however, it seems to me pretty clear, from what has been done, England will be precluded from getting any succours from Holland, either against us, or our ally France. The conduct of Spain is utterly inscrutible to us, at a distance, but from some hints, given me from England, I judge, that there is a trial of skill between the English and Spanish ministry, who shall outwit the other, in negotiation; the latter demand the cession of Gibraltar as the price of their neutrality, which the former flatter themselves with obtaining; while they are taking as much precaution as their strength will admit, to secure it, and, with great assiduity, they insinuate Lord Mansfield's jesuitical argument, that your independence will be a dangerous precedent for the Spanish possessions in America. The Spaniards must soon, I think, see that the English ministry are imposing on them, for they are, in general, a

solid and clear-sighted people. They wish too, that America should give them the Floridas; perhaps, it would not be unwise to agree to their having St. Augustine, with a large district around it, upon their agreeing to allow us a free navigation of the Mississippi, provided they have so little sense as to desire St. Augustine. This I mean only on the supposition that they join us openly, if Great Britain should foolishly continue the war through another year. This measure, I am told, they think of being buoyed up by a few captures made on the French commerce; and, in that case, Lord Howe is to return to the command in chief; but you may form a pretty decided opinion on that head yourself, by the issue of the present campaign in America, by sea and land. If the British forces are successful, the war will continue; if they are beaten, Great Britain will be anxious for peace; in which business, the opposition will give the ministry all the trouble they can, particularly Lord ——, and his tres petite party, for his Lordship has latterly shown himself to the world, what I always thought him, a worthless and wicked character. The ministry, however, can carry any thing through Parliament that they please, for the king of Great Britain may now say, with the European monarchs, *sic volo, sic jubeo.* With respect to Germany, the campaign has ended without any thing material or decisive having passed. The military abilities of the king of Prussia, and his brother, Prince Henry, still shine conspicuous, though the emperor and his generals have obtained as much as they could have expected, which was to prevent the Prussians from wintering in Bohemia. The king of Prussia is to winter in Silesia, and Prince Henry in Saxony. The political negotiations are becoming very violent; both the emperor and the king of Prussia, have called on all the empire, at the general Diet, to join them, but the members assembled in the Diet, have not yet taken part with either side. The electorate of Hanover has greatly increased its army to upwards of twenty thousand men; the king of Prussia expects to have them on his side, and the emperor hopes to keep them neuter. In this situation, neither can, with prudence, take part with us openly; but 'tis expected, by the spring, some certain system will be formed, when we may see our way clearer than at present, for which purpose, I wait here as a central and neutral place, to watch the first favourable opening of advancing the interests of America. There is no speaking with certainty, but to me it seems probable that our connexion with Austria will take place before it will with Prus-

sia, and, perhaps, the former will be more advantageous than the latter.

I am greatly obliged to you for the papers containing the Congress proceedings, relative to the British acts of Parliament, which gave infinite pleasure, and has confirmed the high opinion which this part of the world entertained of their wisdom and firmness. It will be of considerable service if you keep me well informed of what passes with you, and particularly furnish me, early, with authentic accounts of the military operations, whether favourable or unfavourable.

I see by Mr. Timothy Dean's letter to his brother Silas, in France, which was intercepted by the English, and published in the London papers, that Governor Henry told him, a land office would soon be opened for the sale of back lands in Virginia. This appears to me an important business, and should not be entered upon hastily. They will certainly sell higher, and settle faster at the end of the war. I am sorry that the first mode of fixing the proportion of each state's contribution to the general fund, by the number of souls in each state, has been changed to that of the value of land in each state. The first mode was certainly the fairest and best for all: but Mr. J. A. says, it was the southern people who insisted on this alteration, particularly F. L. L.

I have considered the subject of taxation with considerable attention; and from seeing the vicious mode practised in almost every part of Europe, I am convinced, that unless trifling taxes on luxuries may be necessary for the regulation of commerce, a poll tax, on low land, will be ever found the most equitable, the easiest collected, and the most productive of nett revenue. I should, therefore, be happy to find such a mode adopted, and continued, in Virginia.

As to this country (Germany) the poor are miserable; but still it is full of manufacturers useful for America, whose productions will find a profitable market there, and therefore there must be a great connexion between the two countries. This is a disagreeable country to live in, particularly Vienna, which is five times as extravagant as either Paris or London. The language is difficult to learn, and when learnt, is horrible to speak.

Our sincere love and affection attend you and yours.

Farewell. Your's, &c.

WILLIAM LEE.

AUGUST 15, 1780.

My dear Brother—As we have not heard from you since you sailed,* our earnest wishes for your safety makes us hope, that you are now safe arrived; and hope you will not lose any time, in obtaining from the state of Virginia, a remittance for the freight of goods, sent by the Livingston, last year. There is lately arrived at Bordeaux, one hundred hogsheads of tobacco, belonging to the state, and consigned to ..... & Co.; but no order for the payment of this freight, or for any part of the goods. Thus a house, that never did, and never can, if it were willing, advance one shilling for the state, is in possession of large funds belonging to the state, while those who have served it, and advanced their money, are left in the lurch.

In the place you have left, things seem to go on as they did, and the old man seems to have taken up his line, and treats the peaceable minister with as much, or more indifference, than before. The most trifling things are concealed from him, so as to give a general idea of his insignificance. It may be of use to us to know, that the Countess of Scarborough sold at Dunkirk for very near one hundred thousand livres; the Serapis, being so fine a ship, was, no doubt, sold for a million at least. Count D'Estaing has gone to Cadiz, to take command of the allied fleet, which probably will not be able to join the ships at Brest this season; as the English fleet by this time, forty line of battle ships strong, cruising off cape Finisterre and Corunna.

The Russian fleet of thirteen ships, is arrived at the Texel, and the Dutch fleet is nearly ready for sea. The northern league between Holland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, is agreed on, which is the most fatal blow to the English domination on the high seas, which they have experienced this century; and must finally, in spite of all their blunders, past and present, give victory to their enemies. Virginia and North Carolina must prepare for a violent shock, as the force of the enemy is ordered to be divided between those states, next fall, winter and spring, unless Clinton should have work enough cut out for him about New York.

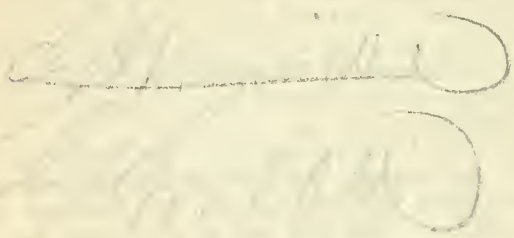
To aid this plan, the tories in England, at least the intriguing characters among them that came from North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland, are ordered back, and to submit to the pre-

* This was written to Arthur Lee, Esq. but has reference to the public concerns of the day.

sent government there, that they may serve as spies to the army, and create dissension and distraction by their intrigues among the people. The shock occasioned by the taking of Charleston, which was ten times greater than it otherwise would have been, from the publication of that vile forgery of a letter, from Clinton to Lord G. G. has pretty well gone over, and our friends in Europe seem as confident as ever, but pray discourage the repetition of such a dirty practice, for it is too base for any but our enemies to use. The riots in England are ended, with about four or five thousand people killed by the soldiery, forty or fifty hung, Lord G. Gordon still in the tower, and houses, &c. burnt to the value of above one million sterling. The city of London, and most parts of the kingdom, thank the king for using military, instead of civil law, so that a revolution similar to the last in Denmark, in its essential points, seems to have taken place in England, where the king is happy, having become absolute. The people in Ireland seem still determined to support their rights, though their Parliament has become latterly as complaisant as that in England.

You have the best love of all here, and we desire you to present our affectionate love to all friends with you. Adieu.

WILLIAM LEE.



SOUTH CAROLINA CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, June 8th, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I had the honour of addressing you under the 1st instant. From that day to our yesterday's adjournment, we have made no progress in the treasury business, nor in our foreign affairs—none at all. This morning is appointed for resuming the latter. Mr. Deane sent a letter yesterday, which he intimates will be his last: he requests an adjustment of his expenses; and, if I remember right, his salary—the letter was committed to the board of treasury. Colonel Wadsworth has laid before Congress an alarming state of his department, and again declares his intention to resign. No less alarming is an explanation from the board of war, respecting essential articles within their sphere. America trusts to . . . . and . . . . to the chapter of accidents; that mere accident which lately happened in South Carolina, will prove an excellent interposition in our favour—we shall turn t'other side, and go to sleep again. Enclosed with this you will receive a letter which Mr. Lovell delivered me yesterday; I suppose it came by the post; and also Dunlap's paper of this morning.

I am, with very great esteem and regard,
Dear sir, your obedient and humble servant,
HENRY LAURENS.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, June 22d, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Since my last of the 8th instant, I am become debtor for your favours of the 6th and 13th. I am mortified by my inability to make proper returns by the present mail; but circumstances render it impracticable. I shall seek for a private hand, or perhaps a public messenger in a day or two

may offer, by whom I may pay my respects, and be almost as early with you as this will be.

We have not yet gained an hair's breadth up the hill of appreciation, nor shall we be able to roll that stone without the immediate interposition of those for whom we have been long labouring in vain. I shall take the liberty of enlarging on this head in my next. I believe as you do, referring to an intended publication, you may remember I intimated the apprehension while you were here, and told you whence it sprung. As to the hearing and open door. I believe it would be a proper means had we proper men; but, alas! one may almost now exclaim with Elijah, "and Lord, I alone of all thy prophets am left." If the conduct of the man had been clear, he would have demonstrated his purity long since. His publication cannot make a clean thing come forth of an unclean. Remember his own criterion for the character of a public minister—but there is the Remora to my process, Colonel Knaublanch and two bran new foreigners, both recommended to me, by particular friends. Dunlap's paper will accompany this, to which I beg leave to refer, and to conclude by repeating, that I remain.

Dear Sir, with very great esteem and affection,
Your obedient, and most humble servant,
HENRY LAURENS.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, 31st August, 1779.

My Dear Sir—Since the date of my last trouble, the 24th instant, I have been honoured with your favours of the 13th and 23d; the former by an express messenger, who assured me, he should not return till this day, but I learned last night at Mr. Lovell's, that he went off suddenly on Sunday. Yesterday I received at Congress, two packets and one small letter, directed to you, these I apprehend came by the eastern post; at Mr. Lovell's request, I shall send them to him, to be forwarded in a proper manner. I am sorry to find you continue an invalid, but how can it be otherwise, if you also continue to fatigue both body and mind. You must not allow the attempts and designs of wicked men, to operate in the very manner they would wish; let us proceed fairly, and softly, and wisely, and truth will drive them out of their entrenchments, they are now closely hemmed in, and cannot escape. On Tuesday last, at the reading of a letter from A.

Lee, Esq. I moved to commit that letter, together with Mr. Lee's vindication, to a special committee; besides the reason of the thing, I grounded my motion on a commitment of a late memoir from Mr. Deane, a copy of which you will receive herewith. You will give this performance a more proper name. The motion was laboriously opposed, and in C. T's. language; after some time spent in debate, ousted by a motion for adjournment. On some day since Tuesday, a report from the treasury was taken up, recommending a warrant to issue for ten thousand dollars, to the Hon. S. D. Esq., in full for his expenses from the 4th June, 1778. I opposed the payment of that, or any other sum to Mr. Deane, until he should account for the large sums of public money which have been in his hands. The question was put, shall ten thousand stand? lost; motion to insert fifteen thousand? question lost; to insert twelve thousand? lost; to insert ten thousand five hundred? carried, even by voices who were against ten thousand, *or any sum*, because they were worried, and had been worried; this deficiency of firmness and perseverence, is the source of much irregularity and much evil in public business. The yeas and nays were called for in every stage, and finally upon the resolutions; I reflect with pleasure, that I stand uniformly through the whole. A question was asked of the treasury, has Mr. Deane given in an account of his expenses? Artfully replied to, by a gentleman who had formerly given proofs of his abilities in answering interrogations, *not a regular one! not a regular one!* This gentleman perfectly well knew, that Mr. Deane had given in a very minute *one*, amounting to 29,000 dollars, and upwards; he also knew the artifice which had been practised by one of his colleagues at the board, to repossess Mr. Deane of a paper, which he discovered, could not be crammed down the throats even of the treasury. I had seen that account, and had been promised a copy of it, but, as I am informed, Mr. Deane, the very next morning, acted a high passion of offence at so shameful a demand, and his zeal for the public good, carried him rather beyond the tone of prudence; he ordered that the account should be immediately carried back to the demandant, with a declaration that Congress would allow no such accounts. As Mr. Deane has not judged it proper to return that, or any other, 'tis not to be doubted but that a gentleman of Mr. Deane's candour, now regrets his rashness in parting with the original. I received this relation from one of those worthy friends, who sincerely wish to see right done, but who will not encounter trouble necessary to accomplish right. I shall endeavour to trace this

matter to its source, and possibly the whole House will be informed of it. Saturday last a letter from Mr. William Lee, accompanied by his vindication, was brought into Congress, but the "order of the day" laid those papers asleep, yesterday an attempt was made to keep them out of hearing a little longer; I complained heavily of the innovation and after much debate, they were in part read: the House grew thin, and at length only eight states being present, adjourned. I believe I am wrong, William Lee's papers were read, those from Arthur Lee were not. My colleague Mr. Drayton, had been confined to his bed some three weeks past. When I had learned that he was really ill, I could not refrain from visiting him, his permission being previously obtained. When I approached his bed, he clasped my hand and wept affectingly; after recovering his voice, he signified great satisfaction at seeing me, and particularly requested I would write a state of his case to Mrs. Drayton. The physicians think him dangerously ill, say he may live one or two weeks longer, that if he has strength for the discharge from an abscess in his side, they shall raise him again, but that he will remain an invalid several months. Upon Mr. Drayton's recovery, or upon the arrival of another colleague, my continuance here partly depends; but I am much inclined to return homeward in the course of the next month. I believe I shall have the honour of waiting on you, before the first of October. Finances as they were. News from Penobscot very unfavourable, but no particulars. I would compound for the loss of all our ships, provided the soldiers and sailors escape capture. Dunlap's paper of this morning, will present Rowland some intelligence. I beg, sir, you will present my compliments to your brother; I shall have much to say to both you and him, when I have the happiness of meeting you, deferring to that time will be the best. Many clouds will in the mean time pass away, and subjects in embryo be matured. I remain, with sincere esteem and respect,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

PHILADELPHIA, September 28th, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I have not had the pleasure of writing to you since the 14th instant. Yesterday I was honoured with your favour of the 12th and 19th. You have quite mistaken the motive for "committing for consideration;" the motion was

made by a very sincere friend of yours; he had entertained hopes of bringing before the House a proper report; a tolerable one was prepared, received, and read, and Monday 12th or 14th, I forget which, "set apart" for considering it in the House: but, although repeatedly called for, its unpleasantness, I apprehend, proved a bar against taking it up. Your friend did not think it quite perfect; he had, therefore, prepared certain amendments, which he would have brought on the book, and I will still endeavour to make the whole appear to public view. You shall be particularly informed in due time. You will have heard before this day of Count d'Estaing's arrival near Charleston, South Carolina; that operations against the enemy at Beaufort and Savannah, were in hand. I expect every hour to learn some important event in that quarter; probably the first intelligence will be brought by the count himself, who may be daily expected at Sandy Hook or Rhode Island. Our commander in chief is properly authorized to co-operate vigorously with him. The season of the year was much against the forces of our ally to the southward. A few days easterly winds, with autumnal rains, would blast our prospect; but I hope the weather has favoured them.

Enclosed herein you will find a general account of three days' work; it will be an exceedingly painful task to recite by and by the particulars. I shall make no comment. I have acted one uniform and consistent part, dictated by conscience for the good of my country, as well as for doing justice to a meritorious individual. My wishes are not accomplished; but, I am nevertheless persuaded the day will come, when that injured individual will receive both justice and honour from his country. By the next post I shall determine whether to leave Philadelphia this winter; and you shall, if I determine to go, be informed precisely the day. At present, time will not permit me to pay that respect to your favours now before me, which is due. I must hasten to the square room, where I often meet many crooked things. I pray God to bless you: and entreat you to be assured that I continue, with sincere respect and esteem,

Dear sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Virginia.

P. S. We have advices to be relied on, that the second division of Arbuthnot's squadron, seven ships of war, having under convoy transports, containing about four thousand

troops, arrived this day sevennight at New York. The troops are said to be "wild Irish" and Hessians; the term "wild Irish" is repeated in several letters.

Twelve o'clock. A circumstance has just happened, which renders a transmission of the paper intended to have been enclosed, with certain comments on it, inconsistent with my honour. Therefore I have withdrawn it.

THE END.

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